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O F
L A V I N I A R A W L I N S .
V O L . II.



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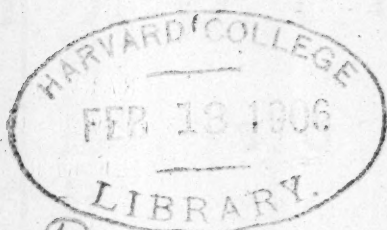
T H E
H I S T O R Y
O F

LAVINIA RAWLINS.

V O L. II.

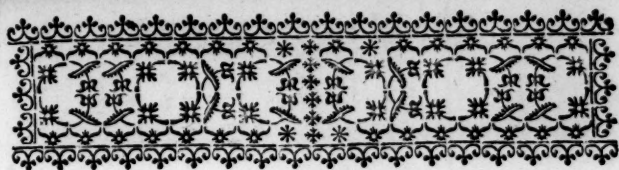


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T H E
H I S T O R Y
O F
L A V I N I A R A W L I N S .

V O L . II.

L E T T E R XXXVII.

*Mrs. Sarah Morris, to Miss La-
vinia Rawlins.*

July 16, 1741.

Dearest Miss Rawlins,



F you can still have Com-
passion upon so miserable
an Object as I am re-
duced to, testify it, at
least, by your best Will and Wishes
for me. Advice I fear you can

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give

give me none, that can extricate me from the Horrors I am surrounded with, in the dismal Place where I now am, much less that can secure me against those Evils which now threaten to overwhelm me.

I exposed to you long ago, the Kindness my young Master expressed for me, and I well remember your Approval of it, if it was honourable. O, *Lavy*! had I but as prudently rested there, as you judiciously cautioned me, I might now have been happy, who am, surely, one of the most abandoned of Women. You are by this time assured, that nothing but a Prostitution of my Honour, my Person, to his vile Purposes, could have drawn these Exclamations from me; for indeed, *Lavy*, I surrendered to him that Honour, which, preserved, would have proved my future Subsistence. This I must confess, but still gave Credence to his Professions, till my Shame growing past Concealment, upon my Lady's tax-
ing

ing me with my Crime, I declared him the Author of it.

O! that it had proceeded no further! Had I but stuck to my first and upright Declaration, all had still been well; but what will not a wicked Woman do, when once she has quitted the Harbour of Modesty! Believe me, *Lavy*, that is the only Security we have, against every Attack of the Devil. But to proceed. Mr. *Thomas*, by the Smoothness of his Tongue, tuned still further to my Destruction, prevailed for my contradicting all that I had before said, and for my laying the Child to *James*, one of my Master's Servants; and I (perjured Wretch) who could deny him nothing (sink not, *Lavy*, at mention of the dreadful Act) swore it.

The innocent Man, providentially directed to a Detection of my Villainy, has procured my Commitment to Prison, for conspiring with my young Master to take away his

Character, and subject him to the Maintenance of the Child ; after having been obliged to acknowledge my first Error, and to swear the Child to my young Master, whose Father now also threatens me with another Prosecution, for swearing the Child to them both.

O *Lavy ! Lavy !* could you but feel my Anguish in this dismal Place for a Moment, you must pity even so worthless a Creature as I am, nor can my Foreknowledge penetrate to an End of my Woes. My time runs on, my Infant proceeds to the Birth ; but what an horrid Reflection is it, when I think what a miserable World it must be cast into, itself one of the most despicable Objects in it.

The small Matter I brought to Town with me has been exhausted in the Provision of such Things as might render me more agreeable in the Eyes of my Undoer, all of which have been parted with for a very Trifle, to subsist me in this dreadful
Man-

Mansion, and in purchasing some small Privileges here; and were it not for *Gatty's* Remembrance of me, now-and-then, I must still perish here, and be lost to all future Memory. I know not how to request any thing from you, *Lavy*, who, I fear, have it not to befriend me with, nor, indeed, can I direct you to any Method of conveying it safe to my Hands.

I have sent you a Copy of a Letter I sent my Ruiner, soon after my Commitment, not doubting but he would have chearfully contributed to my Maintenance, as also his Answer to it; from which you will be enabled, still further, to judge of my Calamities. Pray for me, dear *Lavy*, pray for your most unfortunate Friend,

SARAH MORRIS.

LETTER XXXVIII.

*Mrs. Sarah Morris to Thomas — Esq;**June 18, 1741.**Dear Sir,*

YOU are a Witness to what a State my Love for you has reduced me ; could you but be sensible of the Miseries I endure here, I doubt not but your Compassion would excite you to some Means for alleviating my Sorrows, and the Hardships I here suffer, even unrequested ; at least, you would suffer Compunction for the poor Infant, which must participate of my Fate ; nor can it survive me its Mother, till separated from my Bowels. In Tenderness, therefore, to your poor Child, if not for me, send somewhat to relieve our present most urgent Necessities.

Was it in Expectation of this Event I first yielded myself a Prey to your Importunities ! Surely yourself

self had then no Thought of abandoning me to the Severities I now struggle with, or if you had, you cannot imagine I could have expected it; for sooner had I consented to a living Sepulchre, than to have cast myself into the Arms of the Man I could have believed, would, against his Faith, have thus deserted me.

Perhaps, some Force of your Parents may have restrained the Expressions of your Humanity, under my close Confinement; were not the Oaths, the solemn Vows you made me, addressed to my Belief, my Confidence in you? But O! how am I now deceived!

If you have but the least remaining Sense of my past Favours, my present Miseries, or of your wasting Infant, transmit me some Relief, though but for the Retention of my Soul and Body together, that I may yet extol your Bounty to

Your undone

SARAH MORRIS.

B 4

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LETTER XXXIX.

Thomas — *Esq;* to Mrs. Sarah
Morris.

June 20, 1741.

IT amazes me beyond measure, to find any Creature so impudent as to seek Relief from one so injured by you as I have been. Did you not vow eternal Constancy to me? Instead whereof, you have not scrupled to prostitute yourself, even to my Father's Footman. And have you now the Assurance to call your Bastard mine, when yourself have sworn him to be the Father of it? Nay, to make sure of a Parent, have had the Folly and Impudence to swear it mine too.

Is any Confidence to be placed in such a Strumpet? any Faith due to such an Harlot, who has hardened her Forehead against all Shame? But, Madam, you have thereby made a Rod for your own Back, and

I

I shall prosecute you for Perjury, unless you can produce a Precedent, where any Child hath ever had two Fathers.

You may spare yourself the Trouble of all further Application to me; for should I preserve that Life to you, which your Merits cannot claim, it would only be to reserve you for the future Punishment to be inflicted for your Delinquency: And believe me, I sincerely condemn the Sollicitations of so shameless a Wretch.

Never more, your

THOMAS ———.



LETTER XL.

Miss Lavinia Rawlins, to Mrs. Sarah Morris.

Dear Sally, July 27, 1741.

THE Sketch you have given me of your tragic Fate, is truly the most deplorable I have ever met with.

I would not aggravate your Afflictions, by retorting them upon your own Conduct; but that it has been (even to a Maxim) apparent to me, that one wrong Step is ever introductory to more and greater Evils than itself barely can contain, by drawing us Step by Step to another, and this to more, till they accumulate even to a mountainous Heap, very rarely to be dispersed and levelled again; or, if at all, never without a Flaw to the Conscience, or Reputation, or both, which conserve their Memory to our dying Day.

Though you are not of Age, perhaps, to have made the Experiment before, yet neither of us are so young, as not to have had Instances, in our own Memories, of our Sex, deluded by the other into bad Practices with them, and then forsaken by them; nor can we, from such Instances, deduce a single Example where the Female hath not repented it; and tho' we may be too young to
have

have seen Examples of our own Knowledge, yet our Parents, who lived before us and have seen them, have ever instructed us against yielding to such Temptations, and that from the ill Effects attendant on our Compliance.

Though your young Master had loved you ever so well, and rather than have lost all Hope in you, would have made you his Wife, think you it would have happened for your Sake, or his own ? If not for yours, you prevented the very Cause of his making you so for his own, by granting that unconditionally which he must have put a Force upon himself to have compassed, when attainable only through the matrimonial Tie ; but why do I lavish my Admonitions on that Part of your Case which is wholly irretrievable ? Sorry I am I can apply my Attention to no Part of your Conduct without condemning it : For what could induce you to charge an innocent Man as a Criminal ?

nal ? But then to swear him so too, was diabolical ; and when you had so done, to attest your Master's Guilt with the same Affeверations, and in the same Breath too, as I may say, what Infatuation could so benumb your Senses, as to imagine such a Contradiction could pass unnoticed ?

It is neither in my Power, by Advice or Remonstrance, to disentangle the Perplexity of your Affairs ; all that I can do, and that but very meanly, will be, in some Measure, to alleviate your external Sufferings by a small Donation, could I but find a Method of Conveyance ; but that exceeds my Skill to arrive to at present with absolute Safety ; however, I shall venture one Guinea by the Carrier, and hope he will be so just as, to deliver it to your own Hands.

I wish you once well through your Difficulties, but am apprehensive you have more to struggle with
than

LAVINIA RAWLINS. 13

than I would have to encounter for the Universe. O! that fatal hankering after Advancement! I wish it prove not equally delusive to *Gatty*; not that I blame either of you for accepting the offering Good, but for the Lengths you run to obtain it.

Let me, by all Means, hear how you come off at the Sessions, and if my Mite can be of any further real Service to you, doubt not to command

Your sincere friend

LAV. RAWLINS.



L E T T E R XLI.

Mrs. Gertrude Smith, to Miss Lavinia Rawlins.

August 31, 1741.

I AM under such daily Doubts and Inquietudes, my ever dear *Lavy*, that my Life grows truly burdensom to me.—*Mr. Smith* is a Phantom,

tom,—no *Smith*.—he is I know not what,—or who,—or where,—or—am I certain of him, or he of me, for the next Moment.—What a Life is this I lead!—I can't endure this Uncertainty.

As I was leaning out of my Dining-Room Window last Week, with a young Lady of the next Street, with whom I have formed an Intimacy, by our frequently meeting of an Evening in the Park, who should pass by, in a very elegant Chariot, but Mr. *Smith*, with another Gentleman. He presently caught my Eye, kissed his Hand, and bowed to me; when the young Lady starting up from my Side, my Dear, said she, do you know that Gentleman? I, blushing, seemed as if I did not know much of him; but said, if I was not greatly mistaken, it must be one Mr. *Smith* whom I had formerly been in Company with.

No,

No, no, replied she; that's no *Smith*, I'll promise you; but I cannot think which of us he bowed to, he did it so very familiarly. My Colour came and went so, that I grew quite uneasy at it; but yet willing to hear somewhat more of him if I could: Pray, said I, Miss, if you know the Gentleman, who is he? For I presume the Compliment might be paid to you. A Dog! said she. A Dog? Madam, said I, pray has that Gentleman injured you, that you give him such a hard Name?

She would fain have diverted the Discourse to some other Channel; but my Impatience would not suffer it: For I was ready to burst with Rage, at the Indignity she had offered him. This, she observing; my Dear, said she, very mildly, why are you so uneasy at a trifling Word I gave your Friend? Madam, answered I, since you will please to have it so, he is my Friend; his
Name

Name is *Smith*, and a Gentleman, to whom I owe no light Obligations.

You are not the first Lady, my Dear, replied Miss, who has been obliged to him for her undoing, under many a Name, besides *Smith*. Nay, my Dear, replied I, now you descend to Particulars, I may obtain an Interest in your Reasons for thus vilifying that Gentleman; and as I have already owned him for my Friend, it becomes not me to hear him abused, without either requiring a Reparation of his injured Character, or an Explanation of the Justice of your Denunciation against him.

Will you answer me sincerely, said she, to one Question, which may possibly leave me no Pretence, for the Concealment of my real Reason for bestowing my Rancour upon him? I assured her I would, if it proved a fair one. Who took these Lodgings for you? demanded she.

she. I replied, Mr. *Smith*. Why then, said she, I'll tell you who once took them for me too. I demanded who? Mr. *Jones*, replied she; but both the same Man that crossed us just now, I'll promise you.

This touching me to the Quick, I besought her, if she knew any Thing peculiar of Mr. *Smith*, she would satisfy me in it. Dear Sister in Iniquity, added she, (for such I am now convinced you are) that very Villain, is the greatest Debauchee now in *Europe*. He is a Man of Fortune, and Brother to an *Irish* Peer; but his sole Delight, though no Lord himself, is in making of Ladies; having promised Marriage to half the pretty Girls about Town, but never entring the Noose with them. He has a Tongue that would enchant the Devil himself into Security with him; will swear, lye, and flatter, like Lucifer, to gain his own Ends; will be lavish of his Cash like a young Heir, till he

he has started new Game; then framing some Pretence for a Quarrel with you, will never see you more. This my Dear, added she, hath been my Fate with him, nor am I the first, by Scores, he has served in the very same manner, as I am fully able to demonstrate.

He inviegled me at first from my Father's House, under Pretence of Marriage, kept me emerg'd in Delights, till I was both afraid, and ashamed to return again; when being wholly dependant on him, he debauched me, took me these very Lodgings, and was seemingly the fondest Creature on Earth, for about six Months; when he one Day sent me a Letter, to provide for myself, he having been long enough burdened with me. From that Day he stopt my Supplies, and had it not been for a good Uncle I have, who at my Intercession made up Matters with my Father, I must before now have thrown myself upon
the

the Town, for a Maintenance. Nay, the Villain had the Impudence, added she, when I met, and taxed him one Day with his barbarous Usage of me, to laugh in my Face, and tell me, that having made me Mistress of my Profession, he thought it was high Time for me to set up for myself.

Judge you! my dearest *Lavy*, the Commotions of my Soul, whilst she was relating this Passage of her Life to me: For I therein, as in a Mirrour, beheld my own true Portrait, Line for Line, Shade for Shade, Colour for Colour.

I paused a while, then recovering myself: My Dear, said I, your Report hath unwoman'd me. Is it possible, Mr. *Smith*, the Gentleman we both saw in the Chariot, can be the Traitor you have described to me? Such he was to me, replied she, and from every Account I can learn of him, such he hath proved to many a one before you and I;
and

and I doubt not his still continuing so, to all who shall have the Misfortune to credit him, as we have done. Pray, added she, how long have you been in his Keeping? I told her about seven Months. Then, replied she, I am afraid your Term is near expiring, or his Inclination must be strangely altered.

We drank Tea together, and spent the Afternoon in chit-chat; but her Story was ever uppermost in my Mind, and a longing Desire I had, the next Time he visited me, to have asked him whether he knew the young Lady who was at my Window when he went by; for I was, at Times, half persuaded, he was not the Man she meant; but I checked myself, for Fear of giving him Offence. He stayed all Night with me, when next he came, as pleasantly as ever, and so continued his Visits as usual, for a Fortnight or thereabouts; but one Morning, rising sooner than ordinary, he told me he had an early Appointment upon

upon his Hands that Day, which requiring his dressing again before he went upon it, he could not possibly stay Breakfast with me.

He was no sooner gone, than going to turn my Bed smooth, which till then had lain as we quitted it, I spied a Paper, which upon viewing it, proved a Letter, directed to the Honourable *Charles* ——— *Esq;* This confirmed me in the Truth of my Friend's Story, that he had only occasionally assumed the Name of *Smith*, for his Purposes with me; and that he was a Lord's Brother, as she had before told me; but I gained this by it, that I am now sure of his Name; nor indeed, is any Tradesman to whom I have since mentioned him, ignorant, either of his Name, or Character, which has given me such a dislike for my Way of Life, that I am grown quite Melancholy upon it, and fear I shall continue so, unless my dear *Lavy* can in her next, minister

The HISTORY of
minister some Cordial to the Mind
of her dejected,

But sincere Friend,

GERT. SMITH.

LETTER XLII.

Miss Lavinia Rawlins, to Mrs. Gertrude Smith.

Sept. 15, 1741.

Dear Gatty,

YOUR last, which I should have answered sooner, but for the Trouble I have been in, demanded indeed, some Consolation to your perilous Condition; But alas! my Dear, so far am I from having Consolation to spare, that never Creature had more Occasion for that, from all her Friends, than I have under my present Conflicts, severe beyond Measure to me, tho' they have not been induced upon me by my own Means; but are, as to me, as accidental, as without foundation.

You

You must know, my Dear, that about ten Days ago, my young Ladies were invited to a Ball, at a Baronet's in our Neighbourhood, and were to be dressed as fine as Hands could make them. My Lady had rummaged out her old Hoards for Part of her juvenile Equipage, and amongst the rest of her Trinkets, produced a fine Diamond Cross for Miss *Judith's* Wear, who is the eldest.

They did not return from the Dancing till two o'Clock in the Morning, long before which Time, my old Lady went to bed, having left Orders with me how to behave to them. I made them somewhat warm, had their Beds aired, and put them both to Bed.

The next Morning, when my old Lady came to collect her Jewels together, Miss *Judith's* diamond Cross was missing: The Chamber was searched high and low, her
Clothes

Clothes were all shook and examined, but nothing like the Cross was to be found. I very well remembered, and so I told my Lady, which Miss *Betty* confirmed, that Miss *Judith* had it on when she came into the Parlour; but I had not to my Knowledge seen it above Stairs, so that the Cross could not be out of the House, I was positive. Then who, replied my Lady, can have made away with it; but yourself? I strenuously denied the least Knowledge of it; but it now being given over for lost, and no body having been within her Daughter's Chamber but myself, she threatened to send me to Prison for it.

I was immediately had before a Justice of Peace, to whom I denied the Fact, and offered to be searched. In short, to his own private Judgment, I appeared so innocent, that unless one of them would make positive Oath to my taking it, he said, he could not justify committing me.

My

My Lady, greatly dissatisfied at this, took me home again, searched my Pockets, my Trunk, my Chamber, and every Place where she could conceive I had hidden it; when obtaining no Satisfaction, she ordered me out of her House with my Things, but refused to pay me a Penny of Wages.

These are hard Charges, *Gatty*, upon an innocent Person as I am; for I here solemnly protest to you, the last Recollection I have of the Cross, was on my young Lady's Neck in the Parlour, and that I have neither seen, handled, or otherwise intermeddled with it, ever since, nor know I what is become of it, more than the Child unborn.

I am ^{now} at my Cousin *Green's*, where you may direct for me, but despair of getting into Place again, in this Country, at least; for where lived you last? is the first Question demanded of me, and what came you away for? is the next; neither

of which I am able to answer advantageously to myself, lest Enquiry should be made after my Character, as it was last Week; when the first Word my Lady answered was, she is a Thief. This, must on Course put a Stop to all further Demands concerning me; so that I am cast out from one Service, without Prospect of any other; which my Cousin *Green* perceiving, and fearing I should pin myself upon her, is hourly galling me with Reproaches for my past Behaviour; and that truly, she wishes I would some how dispose of myself, that she may not be suspected of harbouring People of my Principles, by keeping me so long in her House.

These Taunts go very hard with me, *Gatty*; but I am resolved to leave her on *Monday*, with my Stock of thirty-two Shillings in my Pocket; when if no body will take me in, I will perish under the Canopy of Heaven, in my Integrity, rather than

than impeach myself of a Crime I am noways guilty of; for all the Cry amongst my Friends is, why am I so obstinate as not to confess, and beg pardon? nor will a Soul of them give credit to my Affeверations of Innocence, my Lady being so good a Woman, they say, that she would scorn to burden me with a Crime I am not guilty of.

O! let me draw some Consolation from thee, *Gatty*, as two Heads are better than one; advise me, therefore, my dear Child, what to do; for my own Thoughts are spun so fine, as to break, ere I can extend them to any comfortable Conclusion.

Let me hear by the next Post, which will reach me before I leave my Cousins; where afterwards I shall rest, I am ignorant, but my dear *Gatty* shall receive the earliest Account, from her

Abandoned Friend,

LAV. RAWLINS.

LETTER XLIII.

Mrs. Gertrude Smith, to Miss Lavinia Rawlins.

Sept. 18, 1741.

THOU hadst almost persuaded me, my dearest *Lavy*, that none but the Sinner could suffer Shame, by some of thy former Preachments; now either you must assume to yourself that Character, or your Doctrine will have much ado to maintain its Ground, and that from thy own Example.

Alas, *Lavy*! thou hast been deceived, believe me you have; for Time and Chance happen to all Mortals, nor do the best of us pass through this Vale of Life without their particular Share of the Miseries of it. She that has least does best, but let her not build her Fancy upon a total Exemption, be her Life ever so sanctified.

If this is the Case, as to me it most apparently is, why should any

one be condemned for making the best of the present Moment, when she can assure herself of nothing in Futurity, be her Actions what they will? I have entered into Engagements with Mr. *Smith*, in your Opinion culpable; but, hitherto, to myself most pleasing, as to every Necessary of Life now in my Enjoyment; or, should he decline his Favours, I shall never condescend to the servile Office of a menial Servant; but, as from my Friend's Report, I live in daily Dread of a Separation; I am now, before the Thunder-storm falls on me, forming an Interest elsewhere, that when the Time comes, I may have some Asylum to fly to, and be at no greater Loss at parting with him, than himself at parting from me.

I was last Week at the Play, by myself, in the Front-box, when a very young Gentleman taking particular Notice of me, for I was charmingly set off, not only addressed him-

self to me for best part of the Performance, and when ended, would wait upon me to my Chair. When we came out, my Servants were called, but not being to be found, he beg'd me to step into his Chariot, and order his Servant where to set me down.

I'll warrant, my dear *Lavy* would have been frightened to Death, at committing herself to a strange Man at dark Night, and so, my Dear, should I, had I spent the last Twelve-months in *Yorkshire*; but Hearts are more open in Town here, than our narrow-soul'd Ancestorsever extended them to with you.

I seated myself in the Chariot, and my Youngster by me; but had not passed through above two Streets, before my Spark expressed his Hopes, for spending the Remainder of the Evening, with a Lady whose Conversation and Person, he said, had already made such Havock in his Heart.

I declined receiving him at my Lodgings, as noways consonant to my Reputation, when he intreated me to stop by the way, and partake of a slight Repast with him. This I was no more averse to, than just to whet his Inclination for the Proceeding, and at length complying, he gave Orders, as I expected, for driving to a very noted House.

We were shewn up Stairs, Supper bespoke, and had Wine set before us in Plenty, which the Heat of the Playhouse had added the most delicious Flavour to; insomuch, my Dear, that Supper had not long been over, before the Fumes of the Liquor insinuated themselves into our Heads, almost imperceptibly. To be plain, *Lavy*, I don't know that I was ever before so joyous since the Day of my Birth; for I had established a foolish Notion in my Head, that more than two or three Glasses of Wine would make one sick; but believe me, *Lavy*, it is a

meer Bugbear, for nothing more enlivens the Spirits, or invigorates the whole Woman.

It was not long before he petitioned for some Favours, which, from Inclination, I should not have been over-scrupulous of granting, but would have postponed till our better Acquaintance, alledging, that his Favours ought first to have issued to me, before mine to him, for such Concessions were never to be made, till after prior Familiarity, and many little engaging Scenes had passed, to warrant a Lady in her Compliance.

This he allowed to be most just; but as he had hitherto had no other Opportunity than the present, for expressing his Regard for me; clapping his Purse into my Lap, he begged my Acceptance of that, as an earnest of his future Inclination; and instead of what ought to have proceeded; upon this, we retreated to the Bagnio together, where we indulged till next Noon, having before

fore we parted, appointed a second Interview.

I mention this, Child, only as an Instance, how felicitously our Affairs turn out many Times, when not formed upon your strict Principles of Virtue : For no sooner did I attain my Lodging, than I found a Letter upon my Table, which had been sent me the Evening before, containing my Dismission from Mr. *Smith's* further Concern for me, which I will not take the Pains to transcribe, but will inclose in this.

The Hour that I had so long dreaded was now come, and that, at an instant, when I was best prepared for it ; so that it made not the Impression upon me, it otherwise would.

I had about twenty Guineas in ready Cash by me, which you will allow, to be no great Stock to begin the World with, upon my own Bottom : nor did I ever once recollect the Purse I had received the

Night before; till feeling for some of my Keys, it offered itself to my Touch, and then I examined its Contents, which turned out upwards of thirty-six Pounds, in various Species of Gold.

What, thought I, have I been doing all this while? have I been a Slave to Mr. *Smith's* Humour, and lived a Life of Terrors for several Months, in Dread of his Displeasure, for the trifling Pittance of three Guineas a-week, which has but little more than subsisted me? When it is apparent, by my last Night's Expedition, what noble Perquisites are the Reward of a few Hours only? O! that Mr. *Smith* and I had not dreamed on together all this while, I might have been Mistress of a competent Fortune by this Time! I have been picking up Nut-shells hitherto, and shuddering over the Prospect of starving upon 'em, whenever I should be thrown upon my own Hands; when under proper
Ma-

Management, I might by now, have increased my Capital to some hundreds. Farewel then, Capt. *Smith*, with your stinted Allowance. Give me the World to rove in, where I may daily make a better Market of it.

These have been my Thoughts, and Sayings, to myself, ever since I read his Letter; and To-morrow, my Dear, I am to meet my new Acquaintance for the second Time; when should the dear Rogue prove as generous as at first, I shall defy the best Lady of them all to out-shine me. I have many little Things to purchase against To-morrow, and have already out run both my Time and Patience; though I have a dismal Story still behind, to relate of poor *Sally*, whose Time being near up, she looks every Day without the least Rag, or other Necessary, either for herself or the Child, than what I from time to time send her.

Adieu! my dear *Lavy*, you had much better take a Resolution for
London

London, where living as I do, you may have a Chance for better Days, than seem to promise where you are ; but if you come, I shall not recommend a Service to you, seeing what a Hand *Sally* has made of it, in hers, and how well I have been provided for, without it ; therefore let it be her Care to introduce you,

Who is, dear Lavy,

Your affectionate Friend,

GERT. CONINGSBY.

P. S. Direct for me at Mrs. *Wyre-*
draw, in *Castle-street*, *St. Martins*.

LETTER XLIV.

Miss Lavinia Rawlins, to Mrs. Ger-
trude Coningsby.

October 17, 1741.

Dearest Gatty,

YOU Ladies of *London*, shift your Names so often, that had you never been christened, one should
not

not know how to fix any known Appellative upon you. I find you have sunk the Wife, in the Maiden Lady, and possibly, this, amongst your present Set of Customers, may be considered as most acceptable; but as you inform me, you have closed with another Man, how comes it that you fixt not his Name to your last Epistle?

I had answered yours sooner, but have been from Parish to Parish, almost all over the Riding, in Search of a Place; though I am not yet returned quite broken hearted; but was it not for some old Quotations of my poor Father's, which I daily apply to my own Purposes, I must ere now have fallen into Despair: For that good Man, wholly relying on the Aid of Providence, when we have not had sufficient for another Meal in the House, or well knew when we should, never desponded, but would cheer both himself and me with the Sayings of *David*, *that*
he

he had never seen the Righteous forsaken, or his Seed begging their Bread; and again, when we were under the Depression of cross Accidents, and plunged in the Abyss of Melancholy, he would start up with, *Why art thou cast down, O my Soul, and why art thou disquieted within me, trust in God.* After which, he would become as serene again, as if nothing had ever ruffled him; and from his Example, I became so too; nor can I remember, that we ever felt more of the instant Vexation: For either from within ourselves, or from without, we weathered it, and the Storm blew over: So that I say, though my Distresses might overwhelm some others, they have not that Effect on me, notwithstanding I am reduced as low, and for a falsely imputed Crime too, under as much ignominy, as ever poor Wretch was.

Think not, from what I say, that your Letters are burdensom to me in the Postage: For when I can sustain

tain it no longer, I will let you know ; having deposited two Shillings, as a sacred Fund, on no other Account to be diminished ; and perhaps, by the Time I have received six more from you, some unforeseen Supply may present, to my Relief.

Excuse me, dear *Gatty*, for still thinking myself happier than you are ; who (tho' the outward World may smile upon you, and you on it) cannot enjoy that Peace within, which the severest Frowns of Fortune can't destroy in me. This I can do, having no one Thing criminal to accuse myself of ; and was Death to summon me to meet my dear Father, I could quit this mortal Stage with equal Unconcern, as I could shift my Habit ; but fear it is not thus with you, who have placed your supreme Felicity, in Things transitory as a Shadow, and leaving as little Utility behind them.

You may think me dull, and perhaps refuse me an Hearing, should
I

I proceed much further with that Matter, which alone supports my Spirits.

I want to know how *Sally* will come off at her Trial, or whether it is over yet. Poor Soul! how has she involved herself in Miseries, that will not even bear the least comfortable Reflection! I pity her at my Heart, and her poor little Infant, which is all, save my Prayers, I can afford them, and wish you both out of that horrid Place, *London*, tho' in my Circumstances here; repine not at your own Conditions, (they are your own Faults) when you reflect on that, of

Your Loving Friend,

LAV. RAWLINS.



LETTER XLV.

*Mrs. Gertrude Coningsby, to Miss
Lavinia Rawlins.*

Oct. 23, 1741.

IF you and I are further to correspond together, *Lavy*, I must beg
no

no more of your moral Lectures, and the old worn out Pages of the poor Doctor's Sermons. Why, Child, do you know it, another such, would turn me absolute Bankrupt in my Business? What, *Lavy*, all that dry Stuff, and never a Stave at the End on't, to have sent one off a little merrily?

My Dear, it is the worst Piece of Policy on Earth, to preach over much Honesty, to a young Trader one would wish to have thrive in the World; you might with equal Propriety, tie a Man's Legs, and bid him run. It will not pass in my Way, *Lavy*, I'll promise you.

I would not commit a Murder, Child, or rob a Man in the Streets; but if he thinks it worth his while to cast his Cash voluntarily at my Feet, shall I not take it up? Nay, would not it express the height of Ingratitude in me, after great Expence bestowed on me by an Intimate, to refuse him what costs me nothing? If

If a Woman may in any Case allow one Man Familiarities with her, may she not allow another? And if two? Why not twenty? Is she in the least impaired by it? Is not the Rule general amongst all Traders, the larger the Acquaintance, the better Business? It is therefore to me an egregious Folly, for a Woman that would live, to make such a Bustle about Modesty, when for one it provides with a Maintenance, it ruins twenty.

This is what both yourself, and every other Woman must admit as a Truth, when ever you make Use of your Reason; but the Folly of our Sex is, to see, and hear, with any Eyes, or Ears but our own, nor are we to conceive otherwise, than as we are wound up tighter or slacker, by some old Grandfire, or Grandame, who have for an Age before, forgotten their own youthful Desires; as if Girls in this Age, were to grow grey at twenty, and in a Year

or

or two more, decrepid and wrinkled. Now believe me! *Lavy*, we shall never act up to the Standard of reasonable Beings, and worthy the Title of free, and unprejudiced Creatures, till we shake off all old fashioned Documents, and rely solely upon the Bias of natural Inclination; for I am persuaded, that nothing is right, or wrong of itself, but just as we have been taught to take it.

Concluding therefore, what I have said to be true, why will you not seek that Comfort in Life, I'll pawn my Honour to procure you here, rather than linger out the Remains of a wretched Being in the Country, without the least Means of bettering yourself? Indeed, my Dear, you'll grow quite a Mope there. Bless me! could you but for one Day see how we live here, and be sure but of enjoying it, as I do, you would fly *Yorkshire* to partake of it, though you was sure to die next Morning.

Sally's

Sally's Trial is put off till *December*; for that she fell in Labour the Day before the Sessions, which has protracted her Fate for two Months. The Child I am told is more like to die, than live. I sent her a small Present the other Day; but don't go myself, to such Places.

I met young *Collin*, as I call him, as I told you I should, whom I verily believe to be not above one-and-twenty. I could almost love the little Fool, he is so generous. He spends away like an Emperor, and lets me play upon him just as I will; sometimes he calls at my Lodging, and takes me out with him; sometimes he sends for me to the Tavern, where we drink only Champaign and Burgundy, and when we have fatigued ourselves with eating and drinking, away to the Bagnio, to sleep out best Part of the next Day.

It is the saddest little expensive Creature you ever met with; for the
Reckoning

Reckoning, for us two only, came the other Night to upwards of three Guineas, and commonly when all Charges are cleared, and we are about parting, he pours out his Purse into my Lap, let what will be in it, and that's my Fee, he says. Now tell me freely, *Lavy*, can any Life in Nature be more eligible?

He asked my Leave Yesterday, to bring a Friend with him to visit me To-morrow; now my Dear, if his Friend proves but as liberal as himself, why Child, I shall roll in Riches, without running a Penny Hazard for obtaining it.

Don't be a Fool, *Lavy*, and sit starving over your mouldy Sentences, which will not a Straw more Benefit you, than your Father before you; but come away I say, and let me shew you a little of that Life which is only worth living.

I am your sincere Friend,

GERT. CONINGSBY.

L E T-



L E T T E R XLVI.

*Mrs. Gertrude Coningsby to Miss
Lavinia Rawlins.*

Nov. 4, 1741.

THOUGH it appears out of Course, my dear *Lavy*, you not having answered my last, my Head is so full of that Villain *Smith* (as he called himself, and I will not mention his real Name, for the Sake of my Lord, who they say is a truly worthy Man) that I must vent it to you.

You may remember, *Lavy*, towards the Beginning of his and my Acquaintance, I mentioned an Aunt he had, and two or three Kinswomen, I am sure you cannot forget it.

Well! taking that for granted, you must know, that passing their Door Yesterday, thought I, tho' *Smith* and I are parted, yet as the old Lady and her Daughters have nothing to do with that, for to be sure he never

told them he kept me, I will venture in and ask them how they do. I rapt at the Door, which was opened by a new Face, but the most sluttish Drab I had ever beheld. I asked for her Mistrefs, or any of the young Ladies, who were all above, she said, but she would call some of them presently.

I had not waited long before one of the young ones descending, entered to me, but somewhat in Deshabille. I paid my Compliments, and asked how her Mamma and Sisters did? She smiled, and said she would call them.

I heard her run up Stairs, and presently came the old Lady, and saluted me, making it her first Question, when I saw Mr. *Smith* last? I replied, not for several Weeks. And so, said the old Lady, he has left you, has he? he is a sad Man for a young one, that he is, as ever I yet met with.

I coloured up to the very Ears, at the Thought of her Knowledge how
Matters

Matters stood between *Smith* and me. I am surpris'd, Madam, replied I, at your Meaning of Mr. *Smith's* being a sad Man, and leaving me. Prithee, Child! said she, do you take us for Novices? You are not the first by a Couple in the Company, pointing to two of her Daughters, as I took them for (who had dropt in one after the other) that he has deceived; but Patience! Patience! when Matters are at worst, we must endeavour to make the best of them. I hear he has got another Lady now, and is base enough, after all the Civilities he has received from me, wholly to desert my House, and these poor Girls he used to be so often kind to.—I hope, added she, he did not leave you unprovided.—What? you are come to me upon an Application for the Benefit of my House, though you are too modest as yet to speak out.—Well! well! you shall see my Conditions.—These Girls are all upon the same Footing with me:

me; for I scorn to make Fish of one and Flesh of another.—Here, *Katy*, bring down my little Cabinet, they are in that, I believe.

You see, Child, added the old Woman (for, in short, I was under such Amazement at her Discourse, as almost to have lost the Use of my Tongue) that young Fellows, when they are determined, can be as industrious to gain their Ends, as we can, for the Souls of us, or such a Stratagem could never have entered into his Head to debauch you by; but, I suppose, when all was compromised again, you had many a good Laugh about it; for he declared to me, that in all his prior Practice with the Sex, he never met with a Girl so rigidly virtuous as yourself, and had he not hit of the Method he took, he believed he should never have compassed his Ends with you.

Having heard so much more than I could have expected, I grew too

impatient for further Lights into the Affair, to let it rest here. Why, Madam, replied I, we have laughed at it many a time, but he never would let me into the exact Truth of the Affair. No, replied she, did not he tell you that himself was the Ravisher? Why, said I, that was the only thing he secreted from me. Yes, yes, continued she, when he went to bespeak Supper he immediately returned, and forced you; but that you might be convinced it was not him, as otherwise you must have been certain it was, his Servant, dressed exactly like himself, entered to your Succour; when, after a sham Skirmish between them, *Smith* putting his Man to flight, as had been concerted, himself returned, to comfort you upon the Misfortune.

A cursed Villain! said I, and is this really Fact? to a Tittle, replied she; and a cleaner laid Scheme, or better executed, in my Opinion, was
never

never invented ; but he is a Devil of a Fellow for the Women. O ! that I had but at that Instant been sure of this, said I, all the Force in Nature should never have diverted this Right-hand from drawing forth every Drop of his Heart's Blood, an Hell-hound !

Come, come, said the old Lady, it is over now, and, as I said before, we must make the best of it. *Katy* ! hand me the Cabinet (for by this time she was returned with it) I'll read over the Articles to my Daughter, and let her sign them, and become one of us.

I could nowadays, as yet, penetrate what was in Agitation, or what she could mean by the Articles, nor yet choosing to proclaim my Ignorance, I permitted her to proceed in her own Way ; when having unfolded a Paper, and clapt on her Spectacles, she began, by demanding my Name ? I told her *Coningsby*. Your Christian Name ? said she. To which I re-

plied, *Gertrude*. When, said she, I *Gertrude Coningsby*, single Woman, do hereby bind and engage myself to *Margaret Doubleum* of ——— Widow, on my Faith and Allegiance, to execute and willingly perform all her Orders, so far as I am able, for the Term of seven Years, if the said *Margaret* shall so long live; and I do hereby grant her full Power, and free Use of my Body, to dispose and apply at her Pleasure, she the said *Margaret* allowing me necessary Meat, Drink, Physic, and Surgery, Washing, Lodging, and Apparel, meet for the Purposes she shall apply me to, and over and above, of her free Liberality, allowing me the tenth Part of the clear Gains I shall procure her, by any and every Ways and Means whatsoever.

She was then entering upon a Display of the Necessity there was for such Agreements between her and her Daughters, when I interrupted her, by a Demand of what her Articles

ticles (as she called them) related to me? She replied, they must and should be signed by me, before I should follow my Vocation in her House; which Speech of the old Lady proving far above my Match to reply to, I started up from my Seat, dropt a Curt'sy, and glad I was to find myself fairly landed in the open Street again; having never been more shocked at any one Set of Words in my Life before.

My Curiosity now putting me upon Enquiry in the Neighbourhood who kept that House? I was informed, an old Bawd and her Daughters, which fully accounted for her manner of receiving me.

I shall trouble my dear *Lavy*, at present, only with my Request, that she would send her Remarks upon the above Narrative, to her sincere Friend,

GERT. CONINGSBY.

LETTER XLVII.

Miss Lavinia Rawlins to *Mrs.*
Gertrude Coningsby.

Nov. 22, 1741.

My dear Gatty.

HAVING an Arrear of two of yours before me to answer, I shall pass over the former with but few Remarks, that I may the sooner arrive at the latter ; and first, to prevent you the Trouble of future Reflection, I will no further enlarge upon my Doctrines than I can with a good Conscience avoid ; then, as to living as you do, I am to thank you for your Proffer of an Introduction to it ; but till I can new-model my own Conscience, I must prefer my own Way, tho' immersed in an Extremity of Indigence, far beyond it.

I am glad to hear poor *Sally* has struggled through her Lying-in, and am in Hopes she may still weather this dangerous Point ; but had I been so near a Neighbour of hers as you
are,

are, nothing but a mortal Pestilence in the Place should have deprived her of my Society, not only at her Labour, but on many Occasions since. As to the Child, it being in a State of Innocence now, which it cannot expect at riper Years, I cannot say it will concern me to hear of its Death.

You may enjoy yourself with your Stripling with all my Heart, though you need not have stated his Age so minutely, his Actions proclaiming him not as yet at Years of Discretion; and tho' he may be Fool enough to drink too deeply and costly, Women, surely, were never designed for Wine-bibbers.

Suppose (as you say you can play upon him as you will) you had abated one single Pound's worth of the Superfluities of your Entertainment, for the Benefit of a perishing Kinswoman? Think you it had been a less meritorious Act, than to have squandered it away in a Tavern, upon what neither of you wanted? O

Gatty! a good Inclination would have sent that, or more, to poor *Sally*, from the Droppings of his Purse, could the other not so well have been spared. What is Man! and what the Blessings of Riches! that the Possessor only should condemn what consumes both the Life and Soul of others, in expectation and labouring after!

I must not discommend thy Fore-cast, Girl, to be sure; for in all Cases, two Customers are better than one, as most Tradesmen allow; they both have Money, I perceive, and for that may have any thing.

I cannot think, *Gatty*, tho' I sit starving even to Death here, that I am to blame for it; nor can I conceive, though my Father rioted not in his three Guinea Suppers and Champaign, that he was a Loser by adhering to the mouldy Precepts you condemn and scoff at; for, remember *Gatty*, he died like a good Christian. O! that my Latter-end may be like his!

I come now to answer yours of the 4th Instant, and thereupon let me
ask

ask you what you can think of yourself, who have been upwards of twelve Months in Town, have made me privy to most of your Company and Transactions there, and yet can name to me not one Acquaintance, save the honest Hostler who first received you from the Waggon, but whom a virtuous Man or Woman would be ashamed to own? What can you think, I say, not only of the Place itself, but of your Consorts? As for Mr. *Smith's* old Aunt, never fear, *Gatty*, yourself, after a little more Age and Experience, will be as well qualified for a Mother, as that old Lady is. I hope I may be deceived, but tell me, can any thing offer fairer for it?

I must own I never liked Mr. *Smith* (or whoever he is by his right Name) since he made the first Offer of being criminal with you; nay, often hath it occurred to me, that the Rape was but a Pretence to lower your Claim to Honour, that he might make the easier Conquest of

your Chastity, but the Fetch he compassed it by, I must own, was beyond my Reach, though I ever suspected some Management in it.

Dear *Gatty*! can you, a raw Girl but Yesterday, pretend to parry off the Artifices of a designing Villain, who has for Years been trained up to Delusions, under the Tuition of that Arch-fiend the Devil? No, no, Child, however you may flatter yourself with superior Skill in Penetration, such a Fellow as that *Smith* would even baffle *Lucifer* himself at his own Weapons. Let no young Woman then trust any Man with her Person out of her own Command; if she does, she may depend upon soon finding herself under his.

What a Family did he introduce you (as yet innocent) to! tho' now, I presume, you could! be hay-fellow with them; but tho' you escaped the old Lady's Articles once, take care you never fall into as bad or worse Hands, if possible.

How could she, and her Daughters, as she called them, dare to look each other in the Face, collected in such iniquitous Discourse, and knowing of each other's wallowing in Sensuality and Corruption? It surprizes me, I say, that such Creatures can confront each other, without that Confusion, which should disanimate them.

You, perhaps, may account for the Accident now, that gave you such an Opinion of *Smith's* Modesty at the old Woman's. O *Gatty*! *Gatty*! how are the Failings of those we admire transmuted into Virtues by us! I wish the Successes you have lately met with, may not be the Parents of further Evils to you; and that I may not, for all your present Jollity, live to see my dear *Gatty* even more wretched than

her disconsolate Friend,

LAVINIA RAWLINS.

LET-

LETTER XLVIII.

Mrs. Gertrude Coningsby to Miss
Lavinia Rawlins.

Dec. 17, 1741.

I Can stand your Raillery, my dearest *Lavy*, with tolerable Patience; but when you descend to moralizing, you sink in my Esteem prodigiously. Why was there ever any such thing as Pleasure interwoven in our Constitutions, if the Enjoyment of it was to be imputed to us as criminal? Can there be a ranker Note of Cowardice, than not to expose one's self to the Call of Honour? Why not then, where Pleasure presents, and challenges us to its Embraces? But I know thou art phlegmatic, my Dear, and insistest upon Decency, Modesty, and Virtue, and Chastity, and a Pack of out-of-the way cant Terms, calculated by our sage Seniors, for the Subduction of those Faculties, which let loose to Joy
by

by their Children, would prove perplexing to themselves, when past Sensation of them ; and that is the whole of the Case, as I have lately heard it very learnedly argued ; for now, *Lavy*, these things are grown intirely obsolete.

Can you or I say, that what is generally called Modesty, lays not a great and burdensom Restraint upon our Freedom ? I know you must allow it does ; then is not a Relaxation from Restraint joyous, and proportionably agreeable ? Now, whose Power is it in to restrain thee and I but our own ? we having no Parents to submit to ; for natural Regards will often enforce Subjection to them. Would any Girl, therefore, in her Senses, cramp herself with Inconveniencies she may pleasurably avoid ? No, surely, none but the splenetic and hippish.

I go amongst the Men, I act, talk, drink, and behave as they do ; and where lies the Inconvenience of rendering one's self acceptable to
one's

one's Company? I have no Compunctions, Blushing, or Qualms upon me; and why? because my Companions have none. Where is now the Harm done all this while? believe me, *Larry*, you would be just the same Girl that I am, in a Trifle of Time, could I but persuade you to *London*: Nay, I would venture to pay for your Passage back again, if it proved not as I say: Then, dearest Child, try. I aim but at thy living like other Folks, in Mirth and Pleasantry.

I told thee before, my *Collin* was to bring a young Gentleman with him. Lard, Girl! hadst thou but seen how merry we were all the Evening at the Tavern, and then the whole Night after at the Bagnio, you would have fled from your Country Residence, in a smoaky Cottage, as one would from a Plague or a Famine; nay, we never once parted for three Days and Nights. We hired a Phaeton, two of us in it, and the third drove; but such funny
Lads

Lads I never before met with, one might have spent an Age in their Company without Fatigue.

I have been so pestered with an old Fellow since I wrote to you last, *Lavy*, that I knew not how to get rid of him: He met me one Night, in my Walk to *Colin*, and pursuing me to the Tavern-door, entered with me; where he watched till I had made my Enquiry: But *Collin* not being there at my Return, he pressed me so, that I went with him to another House. You would have burst your Sides to have seen how he leered whenever the Drawer came into the Room, either to snuff the Candles or see if we called, and at such times his Cough usually took him, when, with his Handkerchief, he would hide three Parts of his Face, that the Fellow might not remark him. Now this, my Dear, is one of your modest Bloods, is he not, *Lavy*? But the Wretch was too stingy for me; for having promised me a round piece of Gold for the Favour I granted him,

him, the Toad had the Conscience to offer me half a Guinea, insiſting that it was all he meant, and let him tell me, a great deal it was too, he ſaid; but having ſmoked his Foible, I threatened ſuch a Clamour as ſhould bring the whole Houſe about him, to ſee me have Juſtice done me; to avoid which, he produced me a Guinea, deſiring to have the half-piece again; but ſnatching the whole one from him, I fairly made off with both; ſince which I am never free from him, whenever I ſtir of an Evening, in order to gain his Pennyworth for his Penny.—But what a Length have I run, who took my Pen for another Purpoſe?

Sally's Trial is over. She is caſt, and is to ſtand thrice upon the Pillory, to pay a Fine of five Marks, and to be imprifoned till her Fine is paid. She is in a ſad way, poor Devil; but what ſtill comforts her is, that there will now be an End of her Troubles; for ſo ſoon as her Pillory is over, I have engaged for her Fine
and

LAVINIA RAWLINS. 65

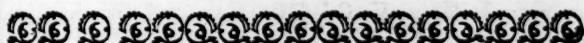
and Fees, which will make her a clear Woman again.

The Child died at a Fortnight old, so that having only herself to provide for, she may do very well, in a Place where neither the old or the ugly of our Sex need want, if they are but industrious; nor can such a Girl as *Sally*, when she gets into the Air and good Living, fear Business enough to maintain her.

I have now finished all, but professing myself my dear *Lavy's*

sincere Friend,

GERT. CONINGSBY.



LETTER XLIX.

Miss Lavinia Rawlins, to Mrs. Gertrude Coningsby.

Feb. 7, 1741.

ALAS! my dear *Gatty*! I little expected I should ever have wrote to you more. I have been so ill for these two Months, that if Providence had seen fit to have released me

me from this World, and all my Sorrows in it, I had been happy. I am, and have been, ever since I was taken ill, in the Cottage of a former Maid of my dear Mrs. *Robinson's*, a Widow with four Children, scarce able to keep Life and Soul together by their utmost Labour, but yet so charitable as to take me in to her, when expelled by my own Relations as an useless Burden to them; nay, tho' I did all the Drudgery at my Cousin's, where I came from, and she snubbed me beyond the Patience of a reasonable Creature, yet I bore it as meekly as possible, nor would have left her, but that she drove me out.

Gatty! this poor Woman, *Goody Gentle*, has been the saving of my Life, merely to repine at my Incapacity for recompencing her; for that, alas! I shall never be able to do: And yet, when I mention the Disquiet it gives me, the good Creature bursts into Tears, begs me to forget my Troubles, and not break her
Heart

Heart with my Disquietude, for I shall never want brown Bread, she says, whilst she has it for herself and Children, for her poor old Mistress's sake, who, she is sure, loved me as her own Child.

Every body said I was in a galloping Consumption; but this kind Woman, by a Number of Simples she gathered in the Fields, and cooked up for me, has so nourished me, that perceiving my Strength daily to increase, I hope, as the Spring approaches, I may recover it.

This is the first Day I have been able to write to you, but presume you have a long Arrear of News for me, which, pray, direct to me as under; but, my dear, either get your Letter franked, or pay the Postage; for I have not been Mistress of a single Farthing for some Weeks, or scarce have I Clothes to cover me. Should writing to me become over burthensom to you, I am now so worthless a Creature that you must break off all Correspondence

dence with me. I can no more for Weeping, but that I am

Your sincere Friend, till Death,

LAV. RAWLINS.

P. S. We have no Paper here, so that if you send a whole Sheet, I can return my Answer on the spare Half. The Farmer to whom my Dame works, will lend me his Ink, as he did, with much ado, this Paper.



LETTER L.

Mrs. Gertrude Coningsby, to Miss Lavinia Rawlins,

Feb. 11th, 1741.

THY Letter, my dearest *Lavy*, set me into such a flood of Tears at reading it, as kept me at home for the whole Evening, tho' sent for by several Gentlemen of my Acquaintance; and how I shall come off with them I know not: But I was no more fit for Society than a dead Thing, nor could I raise
my

my Head from my bent Elbow, till bed Time. Nay, I got not a Wink of Sleep for the Thoughts of it: For truly *Lavy*, your Distresses touch my Heart more closely, than even my own Sufferings.

There is somewhat, *Lavy*, so moving in thy patient Indurance of Evils, as strikes my Passions far more than the Evils themselves. I would gladly send something for your kind Hostess, whom I adore, if you will in your next, inform me how to do it; for her Virtue, Child, which in my Opinion, far transcends all the Qualities thee and I have so often canvassed over, is true Virtue indeed; and if any Reward is due to Goodness, she cannot fail of her Share of it.

Sally is cleared, and I have helped to set her out, and brought her as forward as I could for the Time; and tho' she was at first as poor as thou art, she now goes on very prettily, in a little Lodging, I took her in *Russell-Street*, situated in the very Center of Business: For she is not yet

yet arrived to the privater Streets, such as I lodge in, not having Acquaintance to support the Expence of it.

It almost distracts me to see you so blind to your own Interest, as not to come to *London*. I'll be sworn, you may as readily fall in with the Methods here, as ever I did. It wants but a Grain of Resolution to set you forwards, all the rest is a meer Matter of course, needs no teaching, and practice will soon perfect you. Let me intreat you therefore, to partake of the Pleasures of Life with me, and not to protract your Miseries to grey Hairs, in that loansome Situation, where you are secluded even from the Converse of rational Beings: Deny me not, my dear *Lavy*; lay all your Care upon me, even of providing for you in a genteel Manner, till you are as well intitled to support yourself, as I am; then take good Heart, and let nothing prevent your arrival with,

Your loving Patronefs,

GERT. CONINGSBY.

LET-

LETTER LI.

Mrs. Sarah Morris, to Miss Lavinia Rawlins.

March 2, 1741.

My good dear Lavy,

THANKS to your Bounty, and that of my Cousin *Gatty*, I am now in as fine a Way as I could well wish. I have a very pretty Lodging, two pair of Stairs in *Russell-street*, near both Play-houses; and Business flourishes even beyond Expectation. I can gain from twenty to thirty Shillings a-week, one Week with another, and am daily recruiting my Stock of Clothes, and Necessaries.

Cousin *Gatty*, my Dear, tells me it fares very hard with you, I am surpris'd you won't seek to mend your Affairs, by coming to *London*, the only Place upon Earth where there is no starving, for a young Woman out of Service; and in Truth, it is only the Name our Trade has got, which has accidentally thrown it into Disrepute, amongst
the

the elder Sort of People, for the young ones, without Exception, give all into it.

I wish I could persuade you to come up; *Gatty* says, she will take you a genteel Lodging, and with a few decent Clothes, which will cost but a Trifle, you are made for ever; then is not that better than wasting your Youth in a smoaky thatched Cottage, unprovided for, in *Yorkshire*?

Fie! fie! *Lavy*, never be so squeamish. The Trade, tho' supplied with Dealers sufficient to keep each other in Countenance, is not so over stocked, but you may draw a comfortable Subsistence from it: Then let me have an Answer to my Wish, that my dear *Lavy* is upon the Road, to her

best Admirer,

SARAH MORRIS.

LET-

LETTER LII.

Miss Lavinia Rawlins, to Mrs. Gertrude Coningsby.

Skipton, March 18, 1741.

Dear Gatty,

THE Affection you expressed for me in your last, with the generous Offer you therein made me, and your prevailing Instances for my coming to *London* to you, gained such an Ascendant over a Perseverance of my Miseries, as to bring me to this Place on Foot, on my Journey to you.

I had, under yours and *Sally's* Reasonings, and from the absolute Necessity of the Case, even calmed every Rising of my Mind which offered to the contrary, and at all Hazards, became bent upon the Undertaking. Nay, upon both your Assurances, had promised myself no small Matters in Expectation; but lying down here for my Night's Repose, in a Barn, an honest Farmer accommodated me with, (for I purposed to

beg my Way up to you) far other Thoughts seized my Soul, and wrung from it the whole Force of my Resolution.

I considered, I was going determinately, upon an ill Account; purposely, and of wicked fore Thought. I considered, the total Privation of Character, as necessarily successive, to such Actions as I must pursue; that I must become a Scandal, not only to the Memory of my dear Parents, but to my whole Sex; but above all, and which weighed most with me; I considered it as the undoing all that Interest I had for my whole Life been striving to gain in my Maker; for his Favour, I judged incompatible with the State I was to enter upon: To all which, adding my good Father's Injunction not to go to *London*, these entirely overset every Purpose which inclined me to prosperous Iniquity, and determined me to persist in my Integrity to my last Gasps of Life. So soon therefore, as I have dropped this into the Post
for

LAVINIA RAWLINS. 75

for you, I shall turn my Back upon Skipton, and make the best of my Way to my good Dame again.

I hope you will not take what I have said amiss ; but I have such an unaccountable Impulse on my Spirits, forcing me back, that tho' my Necessities cry aloud for Perseverance in my first Resolution, neither my Legs, or my Faculties, will obey them. If for my Contempt of your Offers to me, I should be from henceforth judged unworthy of further Favour, sink me at once into oblivion, nor ever more recollect there having subsisted that contemptable Wretch, though still

Your affectionate Friend,

LAV. RAWLINS.

L E T T E R LIII.

Miss Lavinia Rawlins, to Mrs. Gertrude Coningsby.

March 20, 1741:

O, my dearest Gatty,

I HAVE such joyful News to relate to thee, that my Words so out-

run my Pen, as almost to confound my Story. Would you imagine it? my Dear; Providence has so brought it about, that I am acquitted of robbing my Mistress; and more than that, my Lady has sent to beg my Pardon for the Injury she has done me; has sent all my Wages, and an Invitation to return to my Place in her Family. I met the Messenger at the very Door, as I returned from *Skipton*. Surely! my Heart will split with Joy, whilst I am writing this; my Eyes run, and my Hand shakes so, I can scarce proceed.

Now *Gatty*! what say you to my dear Father's mouldy Quotations? O! I adore them! was ever any Thing more truly verified? even to a Tittle? I will set out To-morrow Morning fasting to my good Lady, and my dear Misses. I am sure if they could have accounted for it any other Way, they would have been the last Creatures on Earth to have burdened me with it.—But enough of this.—I told you, I go over To-morrow

morrow ; for she will take me again, God blefs her !—I shall pray for her to my dying Day ; and shall still be happy.—Live you, *Gatty*, in *Saint Martins*, and *Sally* in *Russell-street*, or where you will, I shall never envy you the Company you keep, if I once get but about my dear little Ladies again.—I had almost forgot to tell you how it was found out.—But it will be so long, I can't do it now, with so many Things in my Head.--Yes, you must hear that.—No, I am going to wash up my Things and mend them, and shan't be a-Bed to Night.—It will take me up two Days.--I'll send you my Lady's Letter, but you must return it me by the Post.--I don't matter a double Letter, I can pay for it now ; but don't write till you hear from me again, for I don't know where I shall be till I am settled with my Mistress.—Yes you may.—Direct for me there:

Your loving Friend,

LAV. RAWLINS.

P. S. I have not time to write about it to *Sally*, so shew her both Letters.

L E T T E R L I V .

Mrs. Martha W——s, to Lavinia Rawlins.

March 19, 1741.

Lavy,

I SEND you this, upon the earliest advice I have received of your Innocence, in the Affair of my Diamond Cross, most wrongfully charged upon you.—Yourself can witness, how much I respected you in my Service, believing you (as I now again do) the honestest young Creature breathing, till my Daughter so unaccountably lost that Ornament; and could there then have appeared the least Probability for charging it upon any one else, I never should have suspected you; but yourself, whose pardon I now sincerely ask, I am sure must acquit me of intending to injure you, farther than the Necessity of the Circumstance required.

It was proved *Judy* brought it home, you undressed her, put her to Bed,

Bed, and in the Morning, before any one but myself and you had entred her Chamber, it was missing. Upon whom then, but yourself, could the Suspicion fall? But Providence, Child, which in its own due Time reveals the Mystery of our Actions, for the clearing up of your Reputation, hath extracted a Confession from the very Author of that Villainy, when about to suffer for other Crimes: For *Tom*, my Daughter's Servant, who quitted my Service soon after you, having since been condemned for a Robbery, has confessed, that himself found it in the Parlour Window, and concealing it, soon after sold it at *York*; when being full of Money, and neglecting another Service, he fell into the bad Courses, which have brought him to an untimely End.

I heartily beg your pardon Child, for what you have suffered on that Account; have sent you by the Bearer your full Wages, from the Day you first came to me, to this, hear-

ing you have not been in Place since;
and further to recompense you, as
far as I am able, will restore you to
your Place, both in my Favour and
Family; the sooner you return, the
more welcome shall you be, to your
mistaken,

But loving Mistress,
MARTHA W——S.



LETTER LV.

Miss Lavinia Rawlins, to Mrs. Gertrude Coningsby.

March 28, 1742.

Dear Gatty,

I Arrived at my good Lady's the
twenty-second, having spent best
Part of the foregoing Night, in my
heartly Praises to my supreme Bene-
factor. who had not only freed me
from all Imputation of Guilt, but of
his Bounty to such a poor unworthy
Creature, and also made me an Of-
fer of an ample future Provision.

I entred the Gates of my Lady's Dwelling, as into Paradise, where I expected a real welcome; but received it, in a Manner far exceeding my prior Comprehension. My good Lady, and my Misses, collected themselves about me, with all the Joy in their Countenances imaginable; the Sight of which, drew Tears from my Eyes in such Abundance, as wholly to obstruct my Expressions of the Sense I had of their Goodness, and the Satisfaction I received from my Return; they all then sympathizing with me, we were some considerable Time together, before the least Syllable was exchanged between us; but then, by broken Hints, recovering ourselves, they declared their Concern for their Surmises of me, and asked me how I had done ever since I had left them; when upon my stating the Difficulties and Distresses I had gone through, they fell upon my Neck, and we renewed our Weeping.

Miss *Judy* blamed herself prodigiously, for not recollecting how she

had disposed of the Cross, till *Tom's* Confession had reminded her of it; for then, she perfectly remembered, that the String having fretted her Neck in dancing, she had taken it off, and laid it down where *Tom* took it from. Thus my Dear, having made all up between us, I have once more gained footing in that good Family, with an unsullied Reputation; but shall never be sufficiently thankful to that Guidance, which diverted my Steps from my intended Journey to *London*: For that, had I prosecuted it, I am now more than ever sensible, must as certainly have terminated in my eternal Infamy, as my Return, I doubt not, will redound to my everlasting Peace, and Honour.

My dear Ladies finding me so bare of Necessaries, have stocked my Wardrobe already, with abundance of good Things, and are hourly pouring in more, nor is there the least Trifle, that I do not now abound in, (for they think they can never
do

LAVINIA RAWLINS. 83

do enough for me) so that I shall be at the greatest Loss for appearing in them, under the Character of a Servant, they are so far above my wear.

Pray return my Lady's Letter, and direct for me as usual, at her House. I shall take another Opportunity of writing to *Sally*, and pray inform her of the good Fortune, of

Your most happy Friend,
LAV. RAWLINS.



LETTER LVI.

Mrs. Sarah Morris, to Miss Lavinia Rawlins.

April 10, 1742.

Dear Lavy,

GATTY shewed me yours to her, after your Return from *Skipton*, as also Mrs. *W—*'s inclosed. Why, surely, *Lavy*, thy Spirit must be exceeding mean, to receive that insinuating Letter of the old Woman's with such Transport, as by the incoherent

herent Starts of yours you seem to have done. Would not any Girl of Spirit have given another Turn to it, and have commenced a Prosecution against her for defaming her, and destroying her Character, and thereby depriving her of a Livelihood in another Service?

Could any thing be more natural, upon unraveling this Clue, than for her to cry Whore first? and by her Artifices to wheedle you into her Family, to prevent the Mischief she might reasonably judge to be impending over her own Head? It is plain, she is a designing Woman, and knows how to temporize for her own Interest.

Had the Case been mine, I would not have made it up with her for an hundred Pounds, your Hardships well deserve it: But that Diffidence and Meekness of thine, Child, which first came into the World with you, will usher you out of it a Beggar, unless you will take Advice and exert yourself, nor will you ever be your own Mistress. Would

Would I have flunk back again, from the whimsical Notions of a dis-tempered Imagination, after having resolved upon a Trip to my best Friends, who would have introduced me to a State of Independance? No, I would have defied my fantastical Impulses, and, in spite of them all, have pushed on with Courage and Resolution.

A fine thing to make such a Stir about, truly! Is it not? To be a Lady's Chambermaid.—I abominate the very name of Servitude, it debases the human Nature, to surrender up its Faculties to the Pleasure of any Creature but of itself.—In this worthy Station, I presume, you are to waste your Youth, your Beauty, till having past your Prime, and grown too contemptible for the Notice of a better Man, when you have scraped together perhaps twenty or thirty Pounds, the Reward of as many Years Service, *John*, the Coachman, and you are to join Purfes, and hang out the Sign of some paltry Alehouse for Bread.

This

This will be Ambition with a Vengeance! and yet this is the sole Preference you can ever hope to arrive at, in the Way you are now engaged in. — Was there ever any thing so stupid as this? or so dull of Apprehension as yourself, not to see through it all? Shake off the Lethargy that thus benumbs your Senses, and launch at once into the busy World, with me and *Gatty*, where Interest, Pleasures and Delights abound; where Nature, rioting in new Sensations, gladdens the Heart by a perpetual Variety; but this shall be the last time I shall ever give myself the Trouble of rectifying your Errors; so that if you still choose to make your own Bed, even lie in it, for me.

Gatty is gone to *Windsor* with a new Spark, so can't answer yours till her Return. I pity your Case, Child, and shall,

Whilst your sincere Friend,

SARAH MORRIS.

LET.

LETTER LVII.

Mrs. Gertrude Coningsby, to Miss
Lavinia Rawlins.

April 15, 1742.

HAD I not been engaged with a young Gentleman who takes great Delight in my Company, upon a Trip of Pleasure to *Windsor*, my dear *Lavy's* two last had not so long lain by me unanswered; especially, being both upon so interesting a Subject, as that of re-instating my dear Friend's Character in Life again, from the foul Aspersions it had so long been tainted with.

You seem as joyous, Child, at the Invitation to your Place again, as *Sally* or I should of being Lady Mayorefs of this grand Metropolis; but my Dear, it accords only to thy narrow Views, who knowest no better. I could scarce make either Head or Tail of your first Flight, under the surprising Emotions for your stupendous Fortune in being admitted,
to

to what? why, almost one of the meanest Stations in the Creation.

I am amazed, my Dear, you should prefer your Way of Life to mine, who, every Day I rise, reign Lady paramount over twenty such groveling Creatures as you pride yourself to be; though you neglect my Offer for your Advancement, yet by your seeming almost wild with Extasy, at the Attainment of only such indifferent Bread, it is plain you covet to live well, like other People: How then can living so much better, as I proposed to you, be disagreeable?

But to come to your second Work, where we find you in Consort, over a Match of Weeping, till you are all near broken-hearted. Bless me! Child! we have no such things in Town here; all is Mirth, all Jollity; Freedom and open-heartedness flow through every Vein of us. We rise, eat, drink, laugh, sing, and carouse all the Evening, indulge for the whole Night afterwards; rest from our past Fatigue all Day; and
at

at Night begin the delightful Circle again. Here is no weeping or whining, to be admitted amongst us.

You have vast Reason to pity poor Miss *Judy* for the Blame she takes at your Troubles, indeed! A-giddy young Slut! After she has carelessly thrown about her Things, truly, till she can't tell where to find them again, she's mighty sorry she had no better Memory.—Suppose you had been hanged for the Fact, a sweet Recompence Miss *Judy's* Sorrow would have proved for the Mistake!

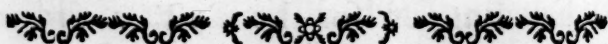
It is the most astonishing thing to me in Nature, that you will be so obstinate as to call Bad Good, and Good Evil. Can't you see that your present Servitude, disgraceful both in Name and Office, must needs tend more to your Infamy, than the Condition of Life I would place you in? Or is it a Matter of Honour you assume, in the Wear of your Lady's old Shoes, Stays, and Petticoats? One would scarce conceive, *Lavy*, that you had ever received your Education

cation in a genteel Family, as Mr. *Robinson's* was ; but there is no leading Obstinacy by the justest Reasonings ! or you had not, for so long a time, and after such repeated Admonitions, with-held yourself from

Your truest Friend,

GERT. CONINGSBY.

P. S. I have returned the old Woman's hypocritical Letter, that has made such a Fool of you.



LETTER LVIII.

Miss Lavinia Rawlins, to Mrs. Gertrude Coningsby.

June 10, 1742.

Dear Gatty,

YOUR last, and *Sally's*, running much in the same Strain, I shall answer them both in one ; but choose not to be over hasty, that I might the better judge how far your Condemnation of my last was agreeable to my best Reasonings from the Subject, by a short Continuance in, and Repetition of the daily Duties of my Employment.

I have, first of all, my Dear, collected from the general Tenor of yours and *Sally's* weighing them deliberately (for tho' your Letters are not couched in the same Words, your Occupations being the same, I take it for granted you mean alike) that you have in *London*, as well as we here in the Country, four-and-twenty Hours to the Day. That you rise, eat, drink, and carouse in the Evening, which I may presume to last from six to twelve at Night: You then commend indulging your Appetite; now, supposing this to last for an equal Space with the former Employs, we are arrived at six o'Clock in the Morning; and here is half the Day's Life gone already, with but little good Account, I fear, to be given of it. Now what I am at a Loss for is, to know what you can mean by indulging your Appetites? For, if Meat, Drink, and Play be not so, you must have most preposterous Appetites to be indulged: Then, to compleat your Round of
Life,

Life, you say you rest from your Fatigue all Day. Was there ever such glorious Living! What! are your Diversions such as will not bear the Sun? Will only Candle-light obscure the Blushes due to your Practices! Methinks the fable Darknes would best of all become them. But, possibly, many of them may pass under that friendly Shade.

It is remarkable, *Gatty*, that the most savage Creatures of Prey set forward in the Twilight, and range and riot till the next approaching Sun returns them weary, and laden with the Spoils of their Fellow-animals. The Robber of our Species, taught by this Example, pursues like Measures; and the wanton Woman, instructed by them both, observes not only their Time of Appearance, but Recess from their Labours, and much I fear, with Spoils too, as unjustly gained as either of them.

Now, *Gatty*, tell me the Glories of the Life you boast of, beyond my own, who, rising with the Light, in-
voke

voke a Blessing first on my ensuing Actions for the Day ; then (Idleness being the most abhorrent of all Conditions) I travel through the several Stages of my daily Duty with Cheerfulness ; I eat, I drink, till Nature cries enough. I rest composed and calmly ; rise again ; pleasing, and pleased, my Round of Life runs on, without a Check to rack my Mind, or conscious either of Commission or Omission, I neither need to fear or lament : And thus my Time proceeds, in a Repetition of near the same Duties, with just Variation enough only, to render them agreeable ; but as to any peculiar Indulgence of Appetite, my Duty being my sole Delight, any thing further would but cloy and surfeit me.

What Life then can pass more smoothly on than mine ! My annual Income is ascertained to me ; all the Necessaries of Life, without my Care or Forecast, provided me ; I fear nothing, want nothing, covet nothing ; than what should induce me to quit
this

this innocent Scene, with a peaceful Mind, for the Perplexities you have both sustained, to intitle yourselves to the graceful and lofty Characters of Common Prostitutes, which, once obtained, can never leave you ?

It is this Light I behold myself and you in ; nor in a better, as to you, can I ever view it ; but the more I reflect thereon, the greater Horror seizes me, at the Deformity it abounds with. Let me therefore, in my Turn, intreat you, as you prize my future Friendship, attempt no more to make a Profelyte of me. Enjoy your Satisfaction in your own Way, but suffer me to retain like Freedom.

I shall ever rejoice at your Prosperity, and partake of all your Sorrows. Favour me still with every fresh Occurrence ; but invite me not to those Proceedings which are the Detestation of

Your true Friend,

LAV. RAWLINS.

P. S. Sally wrote me Word you was gone with a new Spark to Windsor ; as you have not mentioned your Colin lately, pray what is become of him ?

L E T-

LETTER LIX.

Mrs. Gertrude Coningsby, to Miss
Lavinia Rawlins.

July 17, 1742.

I AM never free from some Perplexity or other, on account of that unfortunate Girl *Sally*. There is a Search-warrant out after her, for plundering a *Jew* of a Diamond Ring, and a Piece of Gold; but whether she is guilty or not, I can't yet say. She protests her Innocence, by Letter to me, and charges it upon a young Woman who was in her Company.

She well knows the good Advice I have ever given her, never to subject herself to the Handling of the Law again. One would imagine she had suffered sufficiently by that already; but some People only turn a deaf Ear to the best of Counsel. That Girl is too daring; and was she not so expensive as she is, might live as reputably as most young Women:
How-

However, she absconds till the Affair is either made up or blown over.

I presume I shall have her upon my Hands again, if she can't appear in her Calling ; which, how she can do without Danger, is a Mystery to me. I heard she was out last Night, by which I should hope her guiltless ; for nothing but the Fear of downright Starving should have brought me abroad, whilst the Search was so warm after me.

In short, *Lavy*, our Trade, no less than others, requires prudent Management, if we mean to live creditably, and shew our Heads openly, and that has ever been my Maxim ; the Want of which has exposed *Sally* to such Difficulties.

I have not been extraordinary well for some time, but not so bad as to confine me. I am taking a few things from my Doctor, who blames me for not applying sooner to him ; but he hopes, however, to set me up again.

You enquired after my *Collin*, but I have not seen him these six Weeks.

The Fool lived so fast that he is now in Prison ; nor have I any farther Expectations from him : But besides my general Run of Chance-customers, as I have commonly one, two, or more especial Friends, I am now blest with a young Baronet, who visits me once or twice a-week ; and can I but draw him into an handsome Settlement, which he has several times been driving at, if I would but live with him in *Northamptonshire*, I believe I should quit the Town, and settle at his Seat ; for, really, *Lavy*, our Way of Life begins to be too hurrying for me. About two hundred a-year, I think, for my Life, I should approve of, and may fairly demand, upon quitting all other Company ; and that I purpose to insist upon, if he and I close at all.

This naughty Girl, *Sally*, gives me more Vexation than any thing else. You shall hear what becomes of her from time to time, from

Your loving Friend,

GERT. CONINGSBY.

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LET-

LETTER LX.

Miss Lavinia Rawlins to Mrs. Gertrude Coningsby.

Aug. 18, 1742.

Dear Gatty,

I HAVE been so melancholy, within these two Days, that I know not what to do with myself. You would scarce guess the Reason of it, but it is on the following Account.

My young Ladies, and their Mamma, were invited last Week by their Uncle, to accompany him to *York Races*, where they staid three Days. At their Return *Miss Judy* (who, by the way, makes me her Confident in all her Affairs) reported the Entertainment she met with there, so advantageously, that from my Heart I could have wished to have been of the Party ; but, above all, she commended the Behaviour of her Partner at the Ball, in whom she seemed not to be without Hopes of having a private Lover, from the

Agree-

Agreeableness of his whole Deportment to her ; so pleased he seemed with her the first Night, that he engaged her for the two succeeding, she said.

The second Morning from her Return, I was called up in the most violent Hurry, and must not stay a Minute. *Lavy* ! said my Lady, bring my Things, my best laced Night-clothes, and ran herself almost out of Breath with Directions, whilst I could not but conceive she was crazy, nor knew I how to behave to her. At length, *Lavy*, said she, do you know who's below ? I replied, I did not. Child ! said she, there is the Gentleman I danced with at *York* ; a Million to one but he is come to speak to my Mamma about me.—What shall I do ?—Dress me as fast as possible, and as charmingly as ever you can, dear *Lavy*.

Tho' I exerted my best Skill, I could scarce move quick enough for her ; however, all had not been fixed three Moments before Miss was called

down to her Mamma in the Parlour. My Lady was no sooner gone, than I too, must slip on somewhat better than ordinary ; so whipping into a Silk Night-gown my Lady had given me, I thought to go down to the Kitchen, not doubting but the Gentleman had a Servant there.

Just as I was quitting the Room, I spied my young Lady's Gloves which she had left behind her, and little questioning but she must be very uneasy without them ; as the Parlour Door stood open, I took occasion to pass by it, just shewing her them in my Hand, that if she pleased she might step and take them of me ; but she no sooner saw them, than, O *Lavy*, said she, I am glad you have thought of my Gloves, pray bring them to me.

I stept into the Parlour, where my *Gatty* may be sure, I forgot not to look out for the Lover ; but he sitting with his Back to the same Side with the Door-way, and my young Lady fronting the Door, I
saw

saw nothing of him, till I had delivered Miss her Gloves, and was turned about to go out again. Lucky enough it was for me, that I had not seen him in my Way to my young Lady; for who can my *Gatty* imagine this young Gentleman should be, but my adored Mr. *Willoughby*. I made him a most profound Curtsie, to which he returned me a low Bow; but tho' I did not imagine he recollected me, my Colour was heightened to the Degree of Crimson; insomuch, that stepping to the Glass in the next Room, and viewing myself in that Condition, I would not that my Lady had seen me so, for any thing.

My Shock, at Sight of Mr. *Willoughby* was so great, as to divert all my Thoughts from his Man; so that posting away to my own Chamber, I locked the Door, and vented myself in a plentiful Shower of Tears. Alas! said I, what might I now have been, but for my own scrupulous Adherence, to the Family who have

now cast me off! That very Gentleman now about to demand my young Lady for a Wife, had long ago been my Husband, had I not by an over Exactness in my Conduct, prevented it! And now, should he marry Miss, I may become a serving Maid, in the very House I might have governed! For I am persuaded she will be for taking me with her. Is it possible, I should submit to serve, where I might have ruled! Yes, Necessity, now compels me to it, it is my Fate, and I must sustain it patiently.

My Master, added I to myself, will surely be the kinder to me, for having once himself loved me; but how may he prove kinder to me? What! if his Love recurs, at a Time when it will be unlawful to prosecute it? I may either by my Refusal, be an involuntary Sufferer; or his Instances prevailing with me, not only bring Shame upon myself, but upon my dear Lady, Dishonour, and Misery! No, I am not to be trusted,
even

even by myself, in such a Case as this. I will not therefore go with her, be the Consequence what it will.

This Soliloquy ended, I grew more composed, and advanced to the Kitchen; where, as I had expected, I found one of Mr. *Willoughby's* Servants, with whom, as the rest of my Fellow-Servants did, I entred into Chat, as of where his Master lived, and other Things; but as I presumed his Lady must be dead, my grand Inquiry was after that, which soon brought me to the Knowledge of his being then a Widower, and but just out of Mourning for his Lady, who had died in Child-bed.

He dined with the Ladies, and in the Afternoon took his leave; but not without all the Observation I could take of him from my Window, till my Eyes had lost him, behind the neighbouring Hills.

At Night, when undressing Miss *Judy*, I made bold to ask her how she liked the Gentleman, and whether his Visit was as a Suitor, or

only a bare Compliment paid her as his Partner, to inquire after her Health? I found Miss not near so elate as I could have expected; however, she replied, she could not well say how it was; but being the first Visit, no great Matters were to be expected from it; that at his first saluting her, and for some little Time afterwards, she verily thought he had come on a Lover's Errand; but of a sudden, he sunk so in his Discourse to her, and became so flat, and dull, that she could not tell what to make of it.

I asked if he had made mention of renewing his Visit to her? But she said, not to herself, what he might have said to her Mamma, she could not tell. In short, *Gatty*, I could have kept up the Discourse for the whole Night; nor has he once quitted my Thoughts ever since, but as most of my mental Suggestions are Romantick, I shall endeavour to avoid them, as fast as I am able.

Let

Let me hear how it fares with
Sally, and inform me of your own
 Health. You know not the Relief
 a Line of yours will afford, to your

Dispirited Friend,

LAV. RAWLINS.



LETTER LXI.

Mrs. Gertrude Coningsby, to *Miss*
 Lavinia Rawlins.

August 26, 1742.

THERE are no Reflections inci-
 dent to the human Mind, my
 dearest *Lavy*, so tormenting, as those,
 upon what one might have been,
 but for this, or that, or the other
 Accident intervening: For then, one
 is apt to imagine the Fruition before
 one, and ready to be grasped by us,
 was but that Rub displaced; which
 in itself, implies an Impossibility,
 perhaps.

You, my dearest *Lavy*, must have
 imbibed Pleasure, as well as Pain at
 the Sight of *Mr. Willoughby*; and

but for the fleeting State of that, compared to the Fixture of this, I could wish the same Vision repeated to you ; but as you plainly perceive every thing to make so much against you, how much more prudent would it be in you, to engage yourself in a Way of Life, which would place you out of the Reach of Fortune's future Malice ; but I may have transgressed, in offering this to your chaste Ear, and will proceed no further.

Sally has played her Part so indiscreetly, as to run herself into the very Jaws of her Pursuers, and is now in a Prison, called the *Gate-house* ; from whence, after further Examination and Proof, I fear she will be sent to *Newgate*, and what may be the Issue of that, is hard to determine.

I thank you for your Inquiry after my Health, which I am sorry to say, mends but slowly ; and whether ever I shall be the Woman I have been, neither my Apothecary, or I can determine ; all that I can at present say
is,

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is, I fear I shall be bound to curse my Baronet, with the last of my dying Breath.

I wish you, dear *Lavy*, much happier, than I fear will ever be the Lot of,

Your sincere Friend,
GERT. CONINGSBY.

L E T T E R LXII.

Miss Lavinia Rawlins, to Mrs. Gertrude Coningsby.

August 25, 1742.

Dearest Gatty,

IT is said, it cannot rain, but it must pour; and o'my Conscience, I am inclined to believe it. I thought myself the most happy Mortal breathing a few Months past, upon my Lady's restoring me to my Place in her Family, and hugged myself above measure in the Enjoyment of it; but my Dear, far greater Blessings are in store for me, than I can be worthy to receive.

Did

Did my all generous Patron drain my Spirits to the Lees, but to give me a more accute Sensation of their Elevation, when it should be his good Pleasure to exhilarate them again? What else can be the Reason, that every of his Creatures should conspire thus, to the Advancement of my Felicity?

O *Gatty!* *Gatty!* I should be more senseless than the Stones I tread on, had I not the Gratitude to ascribe it to its proper Author; that Being, whom I have ever studiously obeyed; that Being, I say, whom I have ever dreaded to offend; thence, *Gatty*, and thence alone, proceeds my Happiness. O! I could run on for endless Ages, in Commemoration of his boundless Mercies to me!

My Dear! after Mr. *Willoughby* had left us a few Days, I received from him a Letter by the Post, of which the inclosed is a Copy, not choosng, I presume, to trust it by a Servant, for fear of Suspicion in our Family. Read it, *Gatty*, and tell me

me what I should have gained by a Compliance with your Schemes? These had destroyed me, Body and Soul, whilst my avoiding them hath provided me of a Situation, of all others, on this Side Heaven, the most eligible.

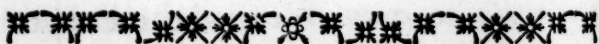
It grieves me to the Heart, to hear of *Sally's* bad Management; but the best of us know not what we may descend to, though ever so abhorrent from our natural Disposition, when once we have over-leaped the Pale of Modesty; for the next Step is, over the Threshold of Vice, where Encouragement given to one Act, clears the Way for a Train of others, till the Will being thoroughly tinged, neither Shame or Fear can be attended to, being both abandoned as impertinent Inmates.

Your last, Child, concluded in a Strain that truly terrified me: For though you point not out the Cause of your Complaint, and thereby leave me the whole Collection of human Maladies to fix my Conjectures on;

yet your interesting Imprecation against the Baronet, in my Opinion, leads me as directly to the Cause of my Fears, and your Disorder, as so many Words at length would. I must admit, you have long travelled in the straight Path leading to it; but may it never prove your Fate, is the sincere Desire of your

True Friend,

LAV. RAWLINS.



LETTER LXIII.

George Willoughby, *Esq;* to Miss Lavinia Rawlins.

Aug. 21, 1742.

Dear Miss Rawlins,

I WAS never in my Life more agreeably surpris'd, than at Sight of you at Mrs. *W—*'s.

I must confess, my Design in that Journey was with a View, which the first Glance of you forbad me further to prosecute, whilst yourself remained,

as I then apprehended, and still hope, unmarried.

You, Miss, are as sensible I once loved, and that yourself too, as I am, that your Beauty, your every Endowment, first taught my youthful Heart to yield to Love's Impressions. Yourself will acquit me, that my Views were honourable, and constant, tho' frustrated through the Disapprobation of your Guardian ; that Rub is now removed ; I too am free, by the Loss of my late dear Wife. I had flattered myself, had all things else concurred, my first Addresses were not personally disagreeable to you ; what, therefore, now, but your own Will opposing, can contradict that happy Union I propose to us both by Wedlock ?

It is not the indigent Station my charming *Lavy* now appears in, that can, in the least, shroud her intrinsic Worth from my penetrating Eye. It is her Virtue, Prudence, Temper, and natural Embellishments, I prize beyond the glittering Pomp of the most superb Equipage.

The

The Diamond of the brightest Lustre, is no less estimable for having once been Companion to the meanest Pebble ; and though a common Eye distinguishes not between them, it is not of lesser Price, to the discerning Artist. This, dearest Miss, let me affirm to have found in you, though now commixed with common Rubbish ; and of this I am so certain, that my Gain would be beyond compare, even in laying down my All to purchase you.

Then, since it is above my Reach to deposit an Equivalent for you, let me intreat you generously to present yourself to the Arms of your most constant,

And faithful Admirer,

GEORGE WILLOUGHBY.

P. S. Let me be favoured with an Answer I beg you ; and that it may have the speedier Passage, send by a special Messenger, whom I will satisfy.

LET-

LETTER LXIV.

Miss Lavinia Rawlins, to Mrs. Gertrude Coningsby.

Aug. 29, 1742.

My dear,

I SENT you an Account, in my last, of my Receipt of a Letter from Mr. *Willoughby*, with a Copy of the Letter itself, but cannot wait your Answer, before I inform you how I have proceeded thereupon.

You know, my Dear, I have often assured you, that my Lady is one of the best of Mistresses, and also that Miss *Judy* had a particular Regard for me; now, as it was plain Mr. *Willoughby* came to our House with full Purpose to have demanded Miss *Judy*, should not I have acted a base Part, to have run away with the Man myself, who had designed her for his Lady? I own I thought I should; nor could I reconcile it to my Judgment: For which Reason, after some Consideration had with myself, and perusing his Letter five hundred

hundred times over, I came to a Resolution of shewing it to my Lady, and did so; but all the while she was reading it, my Eyes overflowed like a Torrent in Dread of the Answer she would return me.

When my Lady had gone through it, Child! said she, very mildly, how long have you known this Gentleman? I told her, and of his Courtship to me, and the Cause of its going off. Very well! said she; and pray wherein doth this Letter so afflict you, that you should weep thus? Madam, replied I, it is not for the Letter itself that I weep, you may be sure; for I have every Reason on Earth to rejoice at it; but lest, as he came, intentionally, to have demanded Miss *Judy*, you should be angry at my Interposition.

Not in the least, *Lavy*, I'll promise thee, replied my Lady; the Gentleman is almost a Stranger to my Daughter, and if, as you say, and himself hints, he courted you before his first Marriage, it is great
Pity

Pity but he should now have you. Few Men's Affections hold so long ; but may I acquaint *Judy* with this ? added she, I told her, if she pleased ; when my Lady ordered me to call her.

No sooner appeared my young Lady, than, Daughter, said her Mamma, you have fairly lost a Sweet-heart in Mr. *Willoughby*. Miss blushing, asked her Mamma what she meant ? when my Lady put the Letter into her Hand. Miss read it, and coloured like Scarlet ; but was so good to reply, well ! Madam, if it must be so, tho' he is a very pretty Gentleman, if he is not to be mine, I had rather *Lavy* had him, than any other Girl in the World.

My Lady then praising my Fidelity to her Daughter, advised me to comply with his Desire, in Answering his Letter ; and themselves set about Preparations for my Departure, not doubting but he would require me over to him, as soon as possible.

I have hereto subjoined a Copy of my Answer, but must defer his Reply till my next; as two Heads are better than one, let me forthwith hear from you. I am,

Your loving Friend,

LAV. RAWLINS.



LETTER LXV.

Miss Lavinia Rawlins, to George Willoughby, Esq;

Aug. 28, 1742.

S I R,

I MUST own, your Presence the other Day in my Lady's Parlour, put me into more Confusion than I have yet been able to shake off, which had still been heightened, could I have imagined you would have discovered in me (under my then Disguise) that *Lavy Rawlins*, whom once you professed to love in Sincerity.

You, Sir, have, since that time, suffered a great Change; but, as
from

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from your Assurances of a still subsisting Regard for me, I can have no Room left to doubt your Fidelity, it would ill become me, now at my own Liberty, not to render the most grateful Return to it.

I have suffered greatly too, from infinite Accidents, since our former Acquaintance; but if these, or greater Severities, have not estranged me from Mr. *Willoughby's* Affection, I shall, with the humblest Submission, subscribe to his Pleasure, as

His most faithful Servant,

LAV. RAWLINS.

P. S. I could noways secrete your Letter from my Lady, who is so exceeding glad of every beneficial Occurrence to me.

LET-

L E T T E R LXVI.

George Willoughby, *Esq;* to Miss
Lavinia Rawlins.

August 29, 1742.

My ever lovely Angel,

YOUR kind Answer, has loaded
my Heart with an Excess of
Satisfaction; and the more so, in
that my Proposal accords with good
Mrs. *W—*'s Pleasure. I shall take
leave to wait upon you forthwith,
there being a Necessity for some pre-
vious Affairs, which the sooner they
are begun, the better: For I would
not, for one unnecessary Moment,
if possible, delay uniting my dearest
Miss *Lavy*, to her

Ever constant,

GEORGE WILLOUGHBY.

L E T.

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LETTER LXVII.

Miss Lavinia Rawlins, to Mrs. Gertrude Coningsby.

August 31, 1742:

O my dear Gatty,

HOW am I daily revived, by the old Quotations of my dear deceased Father, perpetually starting into my Mind ! Those very Sayings, Child, you have so frequently made scorn of, and have laughed at me, for relying on ; I feel them applicable to myself, and daily verified in me. I before sent you Mr. *Willoughby's* Letter, with my Answer, and have now inclosed his Reply.

He was with me Yesterday, and dined at our House ; when my Lady compelled me to the Table with her ; nor will she now suffer me to stick a Pin in the young Ladies. I am also laid in a Room by myself, and, would I permit it, should be waited upon as she is ; but lest my Fellow-Servants should grudge me that Formality, I have begged to be excused it.

Mr. *Willoughby* and my Lady, had a full Hour's Discourse together before I was called in, and then she informed me of all that had passed, and that I was Mistress of the Affections of the most honourable Man she ever met with. Mr. *Willoughby*, said she, my Dear, that you may not, in his Family, appear unworthy the Character of its Head, has proposed your staying with me for a Week or ten Days, till you shall be properly fitted out with Apparel; and for that Purpose, has left in my Hands, two hundred Pounds at your Dispose, he having my Leave for marrying you here; intending, if you approve it, to take you immediately after the Ceremony home in his Coach. Whither, I have promised for myself, and *Judy*, to attend you.

You must, imagine, *Gatty*, that such a Flood of Delight, rushing so suddenly upon me, could not readily be digested, without some palpable Tokens of the Effect it had; which mostly, in me, expressing itself by
Tears,

Tears, I wept heartily ; whilst the dear Man kissed them from my Cheeks, in the most rapturous Extasy.

My Lady then leaving us, he told me she had offered him the use of her House, so long as I stayed in it, if he pleased ; but though he should scarce lie there till the Night before our Marriage, he would call, every two or three Days, to see how our Preparations proceeded.

In the Evening he took leave of me, with such a Kiss, as methinks, I still feel tingling on my Lips. I believe myself most happy, in my Ignorance of the Difference ; but surely ! my Dear, your Delights with the other Sex, whom you scarce know longer, either before or after, than for the short Moment of your iniquitous Dealings together, can bear no Manner of Proportion to mine, in the small Taste I have as yet had of Mr. *Willoughby*. You are much my Debtor for Intelligence ; pray answer me speedily, or I shall ascribe it to your Want of Health,

that prevents it; which will cast a Damp, even upon Joys, so transcendent, as I now expect: For be assured, dear *Gatty*, tho' your Course of Life and mine, are wide as East and West asunder, your Person will ever meet the good Wishes, of

Your happy Friend,

LAV. RAWLINS.



LETTER LXVIII.

Mrs. Gertrude Coningsby, to Miss Lavinia Rawlins.

Sept. 3, 1742.

My dear Lavy,

IT is not for that I willingly would neglect my regular Correspondence with you, but in Truth, my Infirmary prevents it.

That Villain Sir *Roger* —, I fear, has undone me. I was ignorant of my own Condition, (little mistrusting him) till the Malignity had so insinuated itself through my whole Mass, that I can now scarce see out of my

Eyes, and am so swelled about the Throat, as to contribute prodigiously to my Uneasiness; nor have I been able to stir abroad above these three Weeks; then judge you my melancholy State, alone, and absolutely deserted, who used to be so everlastingly in Company; the Want of which, stops every Channel by which my Supplies flowed in. My Surgeon and Apothecary, both still say, there are Hopes of my Life; tho' possibly, with some Disfigurement: But unless they can restore my Vivacity, my Countenance, my every other Air, which have hitherto proved my Subsistence, I tell them, they had better destroy me at once: For that protracting Life on any other Terms, will but be rescuing me from the Expedition of the Axe, to reserve me for the lingering Tortures of the Wheel, to perish as certainly, but with the Addition of an Excess of more accute Misery, which I would if possible, at all Events avoid.

These Reflections, which my present Circumstances often remind me of, give me frequent Occasion for wishing I had practised your former Advice, by seeking out, and sticking to an honest Service, till my Behaviour therein, had merited better Fortune. For now I have Time in Hand for Deliberation, the Course I have so long persisted in, has left but little Relish behind it; and was it but possible I could recover, I have sometimes, had Thoughts of living otherwise; but I fear they would not hold, upon the Experiment.

The sole Joy I am capable of participating in, is for your Prosperity, *Lavy*, with that constant Man, you are so near joining. I confess, my Satisfaction with the Male World have been very transitory, nor subsists there the least Remains of Delight in me, from the Remembrance of any of them.

I could wish! *Lavy*;—but the Time is past, or I would wish too;—but I fear it would avail little.—Let

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me hear from you after the Wedding,
that I may transmit you that Joy, I
I am incapacitated either for receiv-
ing, or retaining. I am,

Dear Lavy,

Yours till Death,

GERT. CONINGSBY.



LETTER LXIX.

Mrs. Lavinia Willoughby, to Mrs.
Gertrude Coningsby.

Sept. 24, 1742.

Dear Gatty,

I THINK, I may now say, that
no Queen that ever graced the
British Throne, could so justly esteem
herself happy as I can. Our Nup-
tials were celebrated on the four-
teenth Instant, my Clothes not be-
ing ready sooner. I was married in
the charmingest white Damask Sack
you ever saw, with some of the most
delightful Linen and Laces that
Hands could be laid on.

G 3

Mr]

Mr. *Willoughby* was in light Cloth, trimmed with Silver very richly. He had purposed to have taken me home from the Church, as I wrote you before ; but my good Lady prevailed for his bedding with me at her House, and insisted upon providing our Wedding-dinner ; which I will say for her, was as elegant, as perhaps you have ever heard of ; for we had a vast Number of Dishes, and whatever the Season would afford.

The next Day, my Lady would have gone home in the Coach with us, but that Miss *Betsy* must have been left behind, who whimpering a little on that Account, my good Lady, to please her, sent the two young ones with us, who have but just now left me.

Mr. *Willoughby*'s Seat is a beautiful Place, situated to a most engaging Prospect. It stands high, and yet is excellently watered ; and as for myself, I am his sole Delight ; and, from the worthy Disposition of the Man, cannot believe I shall ever prove otherwise,

otherwise, unless through my own Fault, which you may imagine will be my only Study and Pleasure to avoid.

O *Gatty*! with what Raptures do I enjoy the Society of that Man, whose all is so much at my Devotion, that his chief Concern is, he has no more to oblige me with; whereas, between you and your Men, there must ever subsist a Jealousy and Suspicion on both Sides; in them, that you are grasping at more than your Due, and in yourself, that they are ever too tenacious; which sets you upon your guard, to seize every Occasion of making them your Tributaries, where you can but surprize them at the least Advantage; but how foreign must true Love and Resignation be, from the Heart thus lying upon the Catch for a present Benefit only!

We have not yet fully formed our Household, but when we do, he promises me a Man and Woman to my own Property, and a Pad of his late

Wife's for my Riding, which is one of the most exquisitely turned Creatures, and cost him thirty Guineas.

We ride or walk, almost every Morning and Afternoon, our Run of Visiter's being almost over now, for the whole Country have paid us their Compliments on the Occasion; and next Week we begin to return them, which we conclude will be a three Weeks Undertaking, they lie so distant, and dispersed one from another.

I have now four new dressed Suits, two rich Night-gowns, and two more making for common Wear; a Gold Watch, three Diamond Rings, besides the plain one I was married with, also Necklace, and Earrings, of vast Value. In short, *Gatty*, Finery and Trinkets flow in upon me so, that not a Day passes without some Addition to the Store, as if the dear Man imagined, my Favour could never be sufficiently purchased.

It

It is not to be imagined what Pleasure I take in my Ability to be serviceable to that good Woman, Dame *Gentle*, in return for the Blessing she afforded me in my Distresses; for I have informed Mr. *Willoughby* of every Particular of my Sufferings, who, on hearing her Kindness to me, rode over to her, with an Offer of ten Pounds a-year for her Life, or to take and provide for her in his own Family; having before, as he assured her, given me leave to bestow all her Children at School, and to Apprentice them out, as they became fit for it,

He told me, the poor Creature had well nigh quitted her very Being, upon the News of such unlooked for good Fortune. She hung upon his Knees, and when she could thank him, did so, to the Heighth of her Capacity; but rather chose her Residence with her dear Mistress, and to be near me, than any annual Stipend whatsoever: So that I shall have it in my Power to be the making

of that dear Woman, and her whole Family, and so soon as my Visits are all paid, I shall have them over with me.

Your Condition, *Gatty*, gives me such Concern, as even every of the above Blessings cannot dispel. Why blame you Sir *Roger*? It may as well be said you infected him, as he you, in general Dealings. It is like bad Coin, each one is liable to take it; nor is it Choice or Inclination that makes it ours, but our happening to traffick with the then Possessor; nor do we take the least Blame to ourselves, in the future Dispersion of it. The first Coiner is lost in the Multiplicity of Hands it circulates through; nor do I doubt but, by this time, others are cursing you for what you lay to Sir *Roger*, and he to the Charge of another Woman; then blame not him for communicating that to you, which, had you been the first Occupier of, had been, by your Means, as certainly his too.

Ignor-

Ignorance, in a Man's own Profession, is no Excuse for Blunders. Why prosecuted you a Calling, without first having dived into its Mysteries? He that so does, must expect to smart for it. But after all, should you recover, though with the Loss both of Complexion and Features, a sedulous Endeavour to live honestly, may prove more advantageous to you, in some other Course than your own: For how many Traders are there, that failing, and having been deprived of the Implements of their proper Callings, have, for that very Reason, when restored to Credit again, fallen upon other Employes, equally, if not far more, beneficial to them.

I suppose, you will soon be able to give me some Account of poor *Sally*, who, should she be reduced to a very low Ebb, I must desire you to support, upon my Credit, as far as twenty Guineas will go, which I will very soon send you, to carry her effectually through her Troubles: For I would
not

not have the poor Girl lost for want of Help; or, if there could be any way of inducing the Prosecutor to make it up with her, so that she might not suffer the Exposure of a Criminal Court, I should even rejoice in a further Contribution towards her Discharge, there being somewhat so terrifying to my Imagination, at being brought to a publick Tryal, as shocks my Nature prodigiously.

I would not have you wholly to despond under your Disorder; let me advise you to condemn yourself in Sincerity for what is past, purpose an hearty and thorough Reformation, in case Providence shall see fit to restore you to Health again; detest your past Crimes, and set your Heart to the Study of Ways and Means for an honest future Support; be truly sincere in these Things, pray for Grace to assist your Resolutions, and as nothing is impossible, believe me this, by drawing down a Blessing upon proper Applications, will be the readiest

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readiest Way to restore you. In the
mean time, I am,

Your true Friend,

LAV. WILLOUGHBY.

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LETTER LXX.

Mrs. Sarah Morris, to Mrs. Gertrude Coningsby.

Sept. 26, 1742.

Dearest Gatty,

THE Sessions drawing near, tho' you have assured me you cannot stir out to me yourself, I must intreat you to send me something, not only to subsist on till my Tryal comes on, but also to fee my Council: For though I have but little to offer in my Defence, I am told here, that those Gentlemen study how to find Flaws in our Indictments, and with the strangest Turns imaginable, will overset a Prosecution at once, in spite of the clearest Evidence in Nature. I don't understand these Things myself, but here is a Man who

who daily attends some or other of the Prisoners, I think they call him a *Newgate* Sollicitor, who gives me Hopes of performing great Matters for me, in case I had but Money ; for it is not the Method of these People to stir a Foot upon Trust, lest the Conviction of their Clients should prove their only Reward.

He has so many crabbed Names for Things, that I can scarce understand one Word in ten that he says ; but I find, that for three Guineas in hand, he can set Matters in such a Light, by some Evidence he is to procure me, as he doubts not will bring me off.

I have been examined by him about it already ; when finding that I took the Things in my own Lodgings, he asked me, whether I did not hear the *Jew* say, that he freely gave me them, for a Favour he then requested of me ? I told him, I could not say I did. Well ! well ! said he, you might be in a Surprise, perhaps, or at least so overjoyed at such

such a Donation, that you might not mind it ; but two People of my Acquaintance, who were discoursing in the next Room, with only a slight Partition between, in which were several Chinks, peeping through, and hearing you refuse to gratify him, because he was a *Jew* (you never having lain with one in your Life, and being afraid to venture) saw him give you both the Money and Diamond Ring, urging you, by all means to accept them, which at length you did, and then both went to Bed together.

O! dear Sir, said I, we never bedded at all. I mean, lay upon the Bed, said he. But there was no Bed in the Room, Sir, said I. Well hit! cried he ; o' my Conscience I believe you are right. Was it forwards or backwards? Forwards replied I. Good again, said he, and your Bed-room was backwards. I told him it was very true.

Now, my Dear, if this Man can, by his Evidence, produce Light out
of

of Darkneſs thus, what may one not have room to hope from his Management? For as he tells me, the Court and the Jury, go all upon Evidence, and then, any Thing will do, againſt the Oath of a ſingle Proſecutor. Nay, ſays he, tho' the Judge himſelf had been preſent, and ſeen the Fact committed; if I can but out Evidence the Proſecutor, you muſt be acquitted: Now, though there is not a ſingle Word of Fact in all he ſays, ſo that he gets me but Witneſſes to ſwear it, it ſtands for the ſame thing, I find.

What I feared would be the moſt againſt me, I told him, was my Confeſſion before the Juſtice, which I had been greatly blamed for, ſince I came hither. Piſh! ſaid he, can you by any Means raiſe three Pieces more? (for he ſays that my Counſel, Witneſſes, and a few odd Things, will come to three of themſelves) I told him, I would uſe my Endeavour, if he thought he could any ways prevent my Confeſſion coming
againſt

against me. Nay, replied he, your Confession may be mislaid, or possibly lost; but had I the three Guineas, I tell you, I would wager them to one, with his Worship's Clerk, that it was not lost, but would appear against you at your Tryal; or come the worst to the worst, you was terrified into your Confession, by the Prosecutor's Threats of hanging you, right or wrong, if you did not own the Fact; and of evidencing gently, and bringing you off if you did; For that having himself once publickly proclaimed the Fact, he could not retract, but must prosecute you for it; and this I have a Witness to prove.

I dread intruding upon you, *Gatty*, for the other three Guineas. O! that I had not been such a Fool, as to have carried the Money and Ring, about me! I might then have had a Supply, to have bought me off. For I plainly perceive, by Mr. *Rap*'s Discourse, (the Gentleman's Name being so) that he could clear me
several

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several Ways, had I but Money
enough for him.

Pray, my dear *Gatty*, strain hard
to let me have it. When I am
cleared, you need be under no Doubt
of my paying it all again,

Your affectionate Kinswoman,
SARAH MORRIS.



LETTER LXXI.

Mrs. Gertrude Coningsby, to Mrs.
Sarah Morris,

Sept. 27, 1742

Cousin Sally,

YOU have applied yourself to the
wrongest Person in Life for
Money. My Illness has been so se-
vere, and such Danger attending it,
to almost my whole Face, not to
mention other Parts of my Body,
that I am almost driven to my last
Guinea. My Surgeon and Apothe-
cary, will act no longer, than whilst
I can pay them Weekly, alledging,
that if I should die, with me must
fall

fall their Expectations; and for this last Fortnight and more, I have been obliged to call in a Doctor to assist them, at the Expence of a Guinea a-day; tho' indeed, he is so good to visit me twice for it, being so modest as to refuse his Fee in the Afternoon, when he has had one in the Morning. Then very few Things are proper for my Diet, so that the Expence of now-and-then a Mouthful of what they will allow me; for at best, I have but little Stomach, is intollerable; which added to my Incapacity for earning a Penny so long, has reduced me to such a Degree, that I am making a Friend of my Physician, now he can gain no more by me, for getting me into one of the Hospitals, which he has promised me to do.

I wish, from my Heart, I had thought of that sooner; and then, being provided there gratis, I might still have had somewhat in my Pocket, more Advice, and have been as well taken care of; but my Misfortune

fortune hath ever been, to think of every thing beneficial for me too late for putting it in Practice. Now, tho' I am not able to add to your Store myself, I can still give you Comfort from another Hand, which, as to you, will be every whit as well.

Having some time ago informed *Lavy* of your Condition, that kind Creature, who is now the Wife of Mr. *Willoughby*, and lives, as she writes me, like a Queen, in all the Grandeur imaginable, hath sent me a Bill for ten Guineas for you, which I will get received, and send you, hoping that will answer all your Demands whatever; though I think you was an egregious Fool to let the Prosecutor have his Things again, unless he would have released you; for if you are to suffer, it had better be for something than nothing; but as the Means *Rap* proposes are feasible enough, never balk the Cause, Child, and I hope he will be able to serve you.

Indeed,

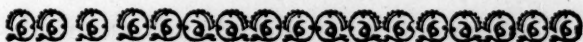
LAVINIA RAWLINS. 141

Indeed, *Sally*, I can't say which is the better off, you, or I, in this Case, should you suffer capitally for this Fact; as then, you are provided for at once, when I may still have a long Time to linger on, in daily Misery, before Death happens to me; nor was it possible I should ever recover my Health again, I shall still be condemned for a miserable Object.

I wish you well, shall long to have it over with you, and remain,

Your loving Kinswoman,

GERT. CONINGSBY.



LETTER LXXII.

Mrs. Sarah Morris, to Mrs. Lavinia Willoughby.

October 1, 1742.

Dear Madam,

IF ever I escape my dismal Confinement, to enjoy the open Air again, it must be wholly owing to your Benevolence, and to the ten Guineas you was so good to send me by my Cousin

Cousin *Gatty*. O Madam! it was the joyfullest Sight I ever beheld in my Life; not only as a Support to my almost exhausted Nature, but for hireing Evidence at my Tryal, to get me off, and for Counsel to speak for me; for want of which, many a poor Soul makes their untimely Exit, who might otherwise have long held up their Heads, as well as their Betters. May Heaven reward you for it! I say, and I hope you will hear it has brought me off; for the Sessions is near upon beginning.

I am glad you are so purely married, and hope you have a loving Husband; which had I but waited for, I had escaped all this Misery and Vexation.

I shall not trouble you further at present, than to thank you for all Favours, and assure you, that while Life remains, I shall be

Your most humble Servant,

SARAH MORRIS.

L E T-

LETTER LXXIII.

Mrs. Sarah Morris, to Mrs. Gertrude
Coningsby.

Oct. 2, 1742.

Dear Gatty,

I Have wrote a Letter of Thanks to
Mrs. *Willoughby*, for the ten Gui-
neas she sent me by you. I hope
all will go on as smoothly as I could
wish. I have had Mr. *Rap* with me
again, and I gave him six Guineas,
for the Purposes mentioned in my
last; but, as he says he must in-
stantly pay them all away, he insists
upon three more for himself; for
that truly, he cannot transact Peoples
Business for nothing, and he gives no
Credit. Well! my Dear, my Affairs
being most dreadfully circumstanced,
as thou knowest, I gave it him, and
having paid a Score in the Tap-room,
and a few odd Things, I have but six
Shillings of the Money left for myself.

I am sorry to hear you grow worse,
Child, and should be glad to hear
Par-

Particulars: But think you are highly to blame, for dabbling thus long with your Surgeons and Apothecaries, whose sole Aim in their Prescriptions is lengthening their Bills. I am surprised, you never applied to Doctor *Rock* all this while, he might have made a sound Woman of you, before this Time. They may call him Quack, and what they will; but praise the Bridge you go safely over, I say; I am sure he set me up once, when I was touched most horribly.

Rap says, he don't fear being too many for the *Jew*, he never loved *Jews* in his Life, he says, and believes he shall exert himself more vigorously against him, upon that Account. I wish he may; for in that Case, I shall never dread the Law more, so long as *Rap* lives, at least.

I wish, when you write to Mrs. *Willoughby*, you would let her know how her Money went, and beg her to spare me somewhat more, for my
Sub-

LAVINIA RAWLINS. 145

Subſiſtance, till I am diſcharged;
and indeed, I think we ought to do
thoſe Things one for another, when
it lies in ones Power. I am,

Dear Gatty,

Your affectionate Kinſwoman,

SARAH MORRIS.



LETTER LXXIV.

*Mrs. Gertrude Coningsby to Mrs.
Sarah Morris.*

October 2, 1742.

Sally,

I TAKE the Opportunity, by your
Meſſenger, of ſaying, I think
you was very impertinent, for taking
upon you what by no means be-
longed to you. Did not Mrs. *Wil-*
loughby write to me, and ſend me the
Money for you? Then was not I the
propreſt Perſon to have returned
Thanks for it? You are enough to
make one mad, to ſee your ſtupid
Management of Things. What will
her Huſband ſay, ſhould he ſee your

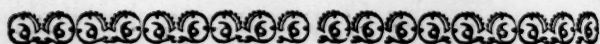
VOL. II.

H

Letter?

Letter?—A pretty Correspondent, you truly, for a Lady of Figure! and I suppose, to compleat the Farce, you dated it from *Newgate* too.—I am amazed at you, and was you not my Kinswoman, would give myself no more Concern in your Affairs. However, I will intreat her for you this once, upon Condition you sit still, and let me alone to manage with her for you.—Surely! I am as able to thank her as yourself, and can do it more to her Reputation.

Your offended Kinswoman,
GERT. CONINGSBY.



LETTER LXXV.

Mrs. Gertrude Coningsby, to Mrs. Lavinia Willoughby.

Oct. 4, 1742.

Dear Mrs. Willoughby,

I HAVE disposed of your Money, in the Way I was advised would be most beneficial for poor *Sally*; and her Sollicitor, from the Part he
is

is to act in the Affair, gives her great Encouragement; but I perceive (from a Hand I have privately employed) it will be necessary to see high with the Prosecutor, who may be bought off for thirty Guineas more: which, unless you are so generous as to advance, I fear it will fare very hard with her.

I see but small Hopes of my own Amendment. I wear away continually, breaking out to that Degree, that all the Aid I can receive will put no Stop to. I am, too late, sensible what my Neglect of your prudent Advice hath brought me to, and, with watery Eyes, behold the mouldering of those Charms I was once so vainly fond of, as to imagine they would prove a Fund of Wealth to my dying Day.

I now fly from that Glass with Horror and Stupefaction, which not long since I have adored my own reflected Form at, by the Hour together, with the supremest Satisfaction, when only sticking a Patch,

or setting a single Curl before it ; that Glass, I say, which now returns myself more loathsome to me, than even my Distemper itself hath made me.

In short, my Life grows burthensome ; but then the Shock of parting with it, dismal as it is, confounds me. I am still buoyed up with Hopes, which I gladly hear pronounced, though I durst not pin my Faith upon them. I shall be glad to hear *Sally* is freed from her Confinement, in Hopes of a tender Nurse in her.

I need not add, that I wish you all Happiness, and am

Your most obedient Friend,

and Servant,

GERT. CONINGSBY.

LET-

LAVINIA RAWLINS. 149

LETTER LXXVI.

*Mrs. Lavinia Willoughby, to Mrs.
Gertrude Coningsby.*

October 8, 1742.

Dear Gatty,

I Received Advice from *Sally*, of her Receipt of ten Guineas, and I could not account for her receiving no more, till you left me room by yours, to conjecture that the rest had been employed beneficially for her.

She is a poor miserable, and indeed, a wicked Woman; but yet she must not perish. I am neither appointed her Pay-mistress, nor am I to retaliate upon her the Ills she may have committed against others. No, I am still to act the Christian's Part by her, and leave the rest to a more discerning Judge; I have therefore sent you the thirty Guineas you wrote for; apply them the most usefully for her, and send me Word, so soon as her Trial is over, whatever may prove her Fate.

H 3

I

I am sorry your Distemper gains such Ground, but it is an Appendage of your Profession. The Sailor has little Room for Complaint, that he meets his Death in the Water, having made the Ocean his Choice. I could heartily pray for your Recovery, in Hopes, this Shock may have rectified your Morals; but if it should only be to relapse again into former Errors, the fewer of them the better, and you ought to rejoice at a speedy End. Look forwards, *Gatty*, beyond the Reach of your Eye here, and omit no Endeavours, for gaining a Footing in those Mansions, which once attained, you would more dread a Return from, than you now do appearing there.

My Life is one continued Scene of Blessings; and yet, I cannot say, I should be so loath to surrender it upon my Master's Call, as you seem to be. O *Gatty*! A good Life, causes a sweet Death; but a Life led in voluptuousness, and wanton licentiousness, ever occasions a bitter Exit. I

LAVINIA RAWLINS. 151

I would fain reccommend Reflection to you, it cannot but introduce good Thoughts, which alone will be productive of good Actions. I am,

Your Friend

to serve you,

LAV. WILLOUGHBY.

LETTER LXXVII.

Mrs. Sarah Morris, to Mrs. Gertrude Coningsby.

October 16, 1742.

O *GATTY!* *Gatty!* what shall I do? was there ever the like heard of before! my Trial is over, and I am convicted; and all without a Word speaking. Not a Syllable in my Favour! not a Witness! I shall run distracted!

Why, *Gatty!* for all the Villain has had nine Guineas of me, that Rogue *Rap* never appeared; left me to my own Defence, and without a single Evidence to testify for me, or so much as a Counsel to plead my Cause.—I told my Story as he had before instructed me. I desired Mr. *Rap* might be called to produce my Witnesses; but tho' my Judge indulged me all that was possible, neither could *Rap*, or they be found;
and

and whilst I was every Minute expecting him, the Keeper taking me by the Arm to follow him, told me I was found guilty.

Lard! *Sally*! I never was so frightened in my Days, and would have told the Court so; but the Fellow could not wait, he said, and dragged me along after him. Thus, am I poor Creature cast for my Life, and absolutely lost, notwithstanding all the Money I paid *Rap* to defend me.

O Lard! what shall I do? I am almost mad *Gatty*!—had I kept my Money!—Nine Guineas would have supported my Spirits a little, under my Condemnation; but now, what will become of me, I know not! I am to receive Sentence with the rest To-morrow.—And then,—farewel *Gatty*;—farewel World,—farewel Life and all.—

My Heart will burst!—What a Life have I led!—Had I but my nine Guineas again!--O! that Scoun-

drel *Rap* has undone me!—I must charge my overthrow to him!—He won't see me, tho' he was at the Gaol since I returned;—but now its all over, every one tells me it is his usual Practice; tho' not a Creature would hint it to me before: For they say, let the Crime be what it will, he'll clear up the Case to a Trifle, before Trial, so long as any Money is to be got out of the Prisoner; then, knowing we poor Creatures can't follow him with our Reproaches, he drops us in the Hour of our Distress, without the least Remorse or Shame.--A cursed Traitor, to use a poor Criminal thus!—Not a Witness!—Not a Counsel!—Not a single Evidence to ones Character!—This, the vilest Wretches never fail of!—But if ever the Villain shews himself to me more, I'll tear the false Heart from his Body, tho' I die for it that Instant,

I shall know more To-morrow,
and will send you Word.—But how

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I shall live till the fatal Day shall come which is to put a Period to my Miseries, confounds me to think; having not one single Cross to bless myself with, and the Prison Diet is exceeding thin, and scanty: unless you can get me something from that dear Woman, Mrs. *Willoughby*, whose Charity, I am persuaded, would still contribute some Trifle to my Support, if she was rightly informed of my deplorable Circumstances. I am,

Your most unfortunate Kinswoman,

SARAH MORRIS.

O! that To-morrow would never come!

LET

LETTER LXXVIII.

Mrs. Sarah Morris, to Mrs. Gertrude Coningsby.

October 17, 1742.

O, my dear Gatty !

IF any Woman upon Earth ever had, I have the greatest of Reasons for blessing the Compassion of my good Judges, who have sentenced me only to Transportation, after having frightened myself all the foregoing Night, with the Thought of Death : Nay, my Dear, my Fatigue casting me, towards Morning into a little Slumber, I even dreamt of hanging, and underwent all the Agonies of it as sensibly, as if it had been real ; but when I waked again, I was vastly surprized and pleased, you may think, to find it had been but a Dream : Tho' in

in such a tremble, and cold sweat, that I have not been out of it since.

My Sentence for Transportation, indeed, has greatly revived me; for to be sure, I was very near sinking into my Grave, when I was set at the Bar to hear my Doom; but whilst I was bracing up my Ear to catch the dismal Sound of, there to be hanged by the Neck till I was dead; the sweet Melody of that Pipe, which (in Consideration of my Youth, and for that it was my first Offence) decreed me only to Transportation, was truly ravishing. I therefore thanked their Honours for their Clemency, dropt my best Curtsy, and hurried off, lest they should have altered their Minds, before my Departure.

We are all to be shipped off for *America*, they say; but be it where it will, I care not: I shall but fare as others do, and they say, many Folks
have

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have come to good Fortune there;
so I make myself easy as to that:
For so long as my Features and
Complexion hold their own, I don't
fear living, upon any Ground in
Christendom.

Dear *Gatty*, procure some Relief
for

Your revived Kinswoman,

SARAH MORRIS.

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LETTER LXXIX.

*Mrs. Gertrude Coningsby, to Mrs.
Lavinia Willoughby.*

October 24, 1742.

Dear Mrs. Willoughby,

MY Cousin *Sally* is convicted of robbing the *Jew*, and we have bought her off with your Money, for Transportation only, with which she thinks herself extremely happy. I used my best Endeavours to have cleared her, but all would not do, when it came to the push, the Matter was so evident against her.

I suppose she will not remain long in *England*; but what she will do till shipped off, I can't imagine, not having a Penny to help herself, or pay for her lying above the bare Earth; and unless you please to consider her, she can scarce, in this cold Season, live to be shipped on board.

It

It is a melancholy Case the poor Girl is in, to be sure, but you will please to remember, it is the last Time she can ever be troublesome to you ; tho' after such Generosity as you have extended to her, it shames me to urge you further on her behalf: Yet, you abound, and are merciful. Whatever you may please to minister to her Necessities, shall be most punctually applied, by

Your most humble Servant,

GERT. CONINGSBY.

LET-

LETTER LXXX.

Mrs. Lavinia Willoughby, to *Mrs.*
Gertrude Coningsby.

October 28, 1742.

Dear Gatty,

YOUR Account of poor *Sally's* deplorable Circumstances, hath moved my Compassion to her further Relief, by a Present of ten Guineas, which I herewith remit you for her, hoping, that she will make a good Use of it, and that by rectifying her future Conduct, now her Life is prolonged to her, she may hereafter, from her Abundance, be enabled to supply others. Tell her, I wish her as well as if I had wrote to her myself, and hope she may be prosperous in *America*, which nothing will more contribute to, than her own virtuous Behaviour there.

Your mentioning nothing of your Health in your last, leaves me Room
to

to hope you are mending, which if it proves the Case, I shall be glad to hear; and let me advise you, when well enough, to return to *Yorkshire*, and seek a Service here, detached from the Vices of that wicked Town you are now in.

Mr. *Willoughby*, the other Day, proposed to me to spend his Winter in *London*, for the sake of those singular Amusements, that Place might afford me, and nowhere else to be imbibed to such Perfection, as he told me; but to be plain with you, *Gatty*, two such recent Examples, as yourself and *Sally* there, have deterred me from accepting his Offer, which would otherwise have proved very agreeable to me: For I see no Cause a modest Woman has, for exhibiting herself at such Scenes of Debauchery, as from all that I have been able to collect from you and *Sally*, that Place abounds with. The best of Resolutions may be overcome; nor is there the least Reason, in my Opinion, for any Woman to run herself

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herself upon Temptations, meerly to try her Strength; which, should it fail her, by Fraud, or Force, or other Means, she is undone for ever; and therefore I have declined it.

Pray send me the Particulars of how you find yourself: But tho' I would have you come down, for your Health sake, as well as your Soul's sake; you are not to expect I should receive you as a Friend, into my Family, till after some Series of Probation may render such a Step consistent with my Honour; and as a Servant there, I could never command *Gatty*, once so dear to her

True Friend,

to serve her.

LAV. WILLOUGHBY.

LET-

LETTER LXXXI.

*Mrs. Gertrude Coningsby, to Mrs.
Sarah Morris.*

Nov. 2, 1742.

SURELY, *Sally*, you have every Reason on Earth to value good Friends. I have again applied to *Mrs. Willoughby* for you, who has thro' my Hands, ordered you a Guinea, of which she desires you to be sparing, that it may Answer your Occasions till you get on board, when you will be provided for during your Passage, free-cost, and upon your Debarkation, be taken into Service.

I wish you well, and should think, for your own sake, and to be relieved from your noisome Confinement, you should long to be upon your Travels.

I grow so very bad, that Writing is irksome to me; so expect not to hear

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hear from me any more, since I can be of no further Service to you. May you therefore prosper abroad, better than you have at home, and at the Expiration of your Term, when I shall be no more, return an honest Woman, under truer Prospects of Felicity, than have ever presented to

Your unhappy Kinswoman,

GERT. CONINGSBY,

L E T-

L E T T E R LXXXII.

Mrs. Sarah Morris, to Mrs. Lavinia Willoughby.

Dec. 20, 1742.

Dear good Madam,

GATTY has sent you Word of my Misfortunes, which had it not been for your generous Donation, first of ten Guineas, and now lately of one more, would have been still more insupportable to me.

I could not have discharged my Duty, nor have reconciled it to myself, had I not made this Acknowledgment to my kind Benefactress; tho' Gatty was very angry with me, for thanking you for the first Sum, and would have had me to have left this last Favour to her too.

We are to sail in few Days, and whether I ever shall see my native Shore again, is very uncertain.

I

I have been ever since I left *Yorkshire*, like a Vessel tossed to and fro in a Tempest, and possibly, may never ride on a smooth Sea more. I can ascribe my Troubles, only to my own Folly, and hope, as I can now so clearly discern it, I shall take more care of my future Conduct.

What sort of a World it is that I am going to, I know not ; but hope to scuffle in it, as well, at least, as others in my Condition, which I am told will be very tolerable, dependant on my own Diligence ; and that some who have gone over as I shall, have come to good Preference, by Marriage, and otherwise. May that prove my Fate ! But dear Madam, assure yourself, that wherever I am, or whatever becomes of me, I shall never cease to retain a past Sense of Mrs. *Willoughby's* Obligations, conferred upon her most unworthy,

SARAH MORRIS.

LET-

LETTER LXXXIII.

*Mrs. Lavinia Willoughby, to Mrs.
Gertrude Coningsby.*

Dec. 26, 1742.

Dear Gatty,

A LETTER I received from *Sally* the other Day, gives me no little Surprize, wherein she tells me, she never received more than eleven Guineas from me, ten of the first twenty, and but a single one of the last ten, nor apprehend I, that she has ever been informed of my sending the thirty, which if she had, she would not have omitted her Thanks for.

Inform me how that Matter stands, and how the rest have been disposed of: For intending the whole for her Benefit, I should hope it was applied accordingly.

I suppose, the unhappy Girl is failed by this Time; but who can foretel their Fate! surely, it is
owing

owing to that Uncertainty, that we plunge into such a World of Miseries; yet, mostly avoidable, I am persuaded, from practising a thorough Consideration; for want of which, no two Steps of our Lives succeed, intentionally, as consequential one of the other.

Your State of Health is what I would fain hear of, as also, why *Sally* had not Money in Hand to carry abroad with her, since that might possibly have gained her some Favour, at her first arrival in a strange Country.

Let me hear from you soon, for the Quiet of

Your Friend to serve you,

LAV. WILLOUGHBY.

LETTER LXXXIV.

*Mrs. Gertrude Coningsby to Mrs.
Lavinia Willoughby.*

Feb. 2, 1742.

Dearest Mrs. Willoughby.

WELL may you wonder at my Delay of writing, according to the Request of your last, so long ago as the 26th of *December*; but the daily Expectation of my Dissolution, which might have shrouded the Shame I might take to myself, for not only injuring *Sally* to the highest Degree, but also imposing most grossly upon yourself, prevented it.

I am now drawing so near to that Country, where the most reclude Privacies will be exposed, that
to

to advance all in my Power towards an Attonement, I shall proceed to accuse myself to you; being fully assured, I cannot live to be confounded, by your confronting me.

Know then, dear Mrs. *Willoughby*, that in the Beginning of my long Illness, having some little Stock of Money by me, and under the Hope of a speedy Cure, I lavished it away upon the Faculty, till I was reduced to my last Guinea. This would have been gorged by my Doctor the next Morning, and have left me wholly destitute, had not your present of twenty Guineas, most opportunely arrived, that Afternoon for *Sally*. My Necessities, and the Readiness of the Supply at hand, induced me to make Prize of one Half of it, sending the other only to *Sally*, which was wholly thrown away by her (as my Moiety would also, had it been but surmised she was possessed of it) upon a Villain, who makes a Trade, under Pretence of

Service, to fleece those unhappy Creatures, who, by Reason of their Confinement, cannot have Recourse to more abler Heads, or Hands, for transacting their Concerns for them.

I speak not this, Madam, to alleviate my own Guilt; for if my pressing Necessities will not, I am satisfied nothing else can.

I wish I could say I had ended here; but, dear Madam, as I am now a dying Woman, I must confess, that *Sally* never once, even heard of your thirty Guineas: for having received such Comfort from the ten, which by the Time of my Receipt of the thirty, were wholly exhausted; I made Prize of these, as my last Resort, for my own Benefit only; but whether they could have been beneficially employed for *Sally*, I know not, having never tried.

Of your last Present, I also confess, I sent her but one Guinea,
hop-

hoping that would carry her thro', till she went on board ; but I never heard whether it did or not.

I own, it was the Pride of my Heart, to conceal from your Knowledge, the Poverty of my Condition ; and Death I could have faced with more Freedom, than I could then have exposed my Circumstances to you, who had only heard of the Gains of my Calling ; which tho', indeed, they were sometimes extraordinary, yet, I know not whence it arises, but there is in most Persons in my Way, that inward Propensity to Profuseness ; that Impudence, which accompanies us, that let our Gains rise ever so largely, we are always Beggars.

You, Madam, are indued with such Benignity of Mind, as I hope will pardon my Crime, which has only served me for a Time, just to stave off what I have ever most dreaded, but am at last reduced to a Place in one of the Wards of an Hospital,

appropriated to Persons under my Malady; and had I now but where-withal to bury me decently, I could rest my appointed Time here, more contentedly.

O! Mrs. *Willoughby*! what an Alteration is here, in little more than two Years, since I left you, in *Yorkshire*, an helpless Girl there! but an honest one; honest at Heart;—nor dared you to run the Lengths that I have run. I was for a short and merry Life, rather than an honest Drudgery; and had I fallen by any other Means, I fear I had still esteemed my Choice; but dropping thus by Inches, as I do, and dying a living Death, uncertain when it will end me, reduces me to the very Dregs of Misery.

I have been a Month, by a few Words, or Lines at a Time, as my Strength and Spirits have served, scratching out this almost illegible Account of myself. It is the last I can ever write. Then, O! forgive me,

LAVINIA RAWLINS. 175

me, dearest! dearest Mrs. *Willoughby*! pardon the Misconduct
of

Your, despicable

and dying Friend,

GERT. CONINGSBY.

L E T T E R LXXXV.

*Mrs. Lavinia Willoughby to Mrs.
Gertrude Coningsby.*

March 12, 1742.

Poor Gatty,

TH Y Misconduct first, and subsequent Misfortunes, grieve me at the very Heart. It is rather of the latest now, to sermonize to you; a Thing, you heretofore so loudly exclaimed against; tho' at present, perhaps you might with more Patience suffer it, your present Circumstances being unattended with those vain Delights, which then, made the Remembrance of your Failings irksome to you.

I shall not, however, reproach you with past Stories, which can never be recalled, but with Detestation; but if I can prevail with you only for a Remembrance of them, I shall then have attained my Purpose. We are all prone to Evil, even the very best
of

of us; and as absolute Perfection is not expected, they who sin least, are the best Christians.

I have met with it somewhere in my reading, that one Sin is enough to destroy a World; and justly so, as being a Violence offered to the Framers of it: But as that Being, is not only the aggregate of all Justice, but Mercy too; so proportionally to our Sorrow for our Offences, shall be our Remission; the more Sin, the more Repentance therefore is necessary. I mean not, that the more frequent criminal Acts you commit, the more frequent should be your Acts of Repentance, but that your Contrition should be the more intense, even so as to extend it but to a single Act, for the Remainder of your whole Life.

It should seem to me, to be the Bountiful Intent of Providence to shew you Mercy; nay, even to compel your Acceptance of it, by retaining you so long in those Miseries, which by blunting your Ap-

petite for the Things of this World, have afforded you a proper Space for Reflection on what is to succeed them, as undoubtedly, your Portion of Futurity.

Let me then persuade you, *Gatty*, (as every Friend ought to do, in Matters of far inferiour Concernment) to prepare yourself with all Sedulity, for the State you must soon appear in. Would not any of us, who was certain of being cast upon a new Way of Life here, apply before hand, by all Ways and Means, to qualify himself for sustaining it with Reputation, and Lustre? This is all that I would have you now do, till the Time of your engaging in it arrives; that you may be qualified as a Competitor for the chief Room, and not be set aside with Shame, and Disgrace, as insufficient, for what every one may, with Care, attain to.

Be not impatient under your Sufferings; but glory in them, as the
Calls

Calls to Repentance. Extend the Span of Life as long as possible, though it may prove painful to you : For in whatever State Death surprises you, in that, must be your Lot to all Eternity.

This once duely pondered, how inconsiderable are our bodily Pains here, and lightly to be esteemed of us, whilst during their Continuance, we are paving a Passage to everlasting Happiness.

I wish you every Advantage redounding from Consideration, and the happy Effects of it. As for my own Part, in the Instances wherein my Trust reposed in you has been abused, I heartily forgive you, and hope poor *Sally* may have been no material Sufferer by them. May that poor Girl, under this Warning, be cautious of future Offences, and being sincerely repentant of her past Ways, prove a worthy Woman.

I have sent you ten Guineas, as the within will testify, to defray those
Charges

Charges you seem so anxious about ; expecting therefore to hear no more from you ; my Prayers shall attend your departing Spirit, and whilst you may yet be permitted to remain amongst us, may the Accuteness of your Distemper, rather Augment, than decrease, the Fervency of your Zeal, for your poor Soul's Welfare. I am,,

Dear Child,

Your hearty Well-wisher,

LAV. WILLOUGHBY.

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